猫絵十兵衛 三

ねこえじゅうべえおとぎそうし

御伽草紙

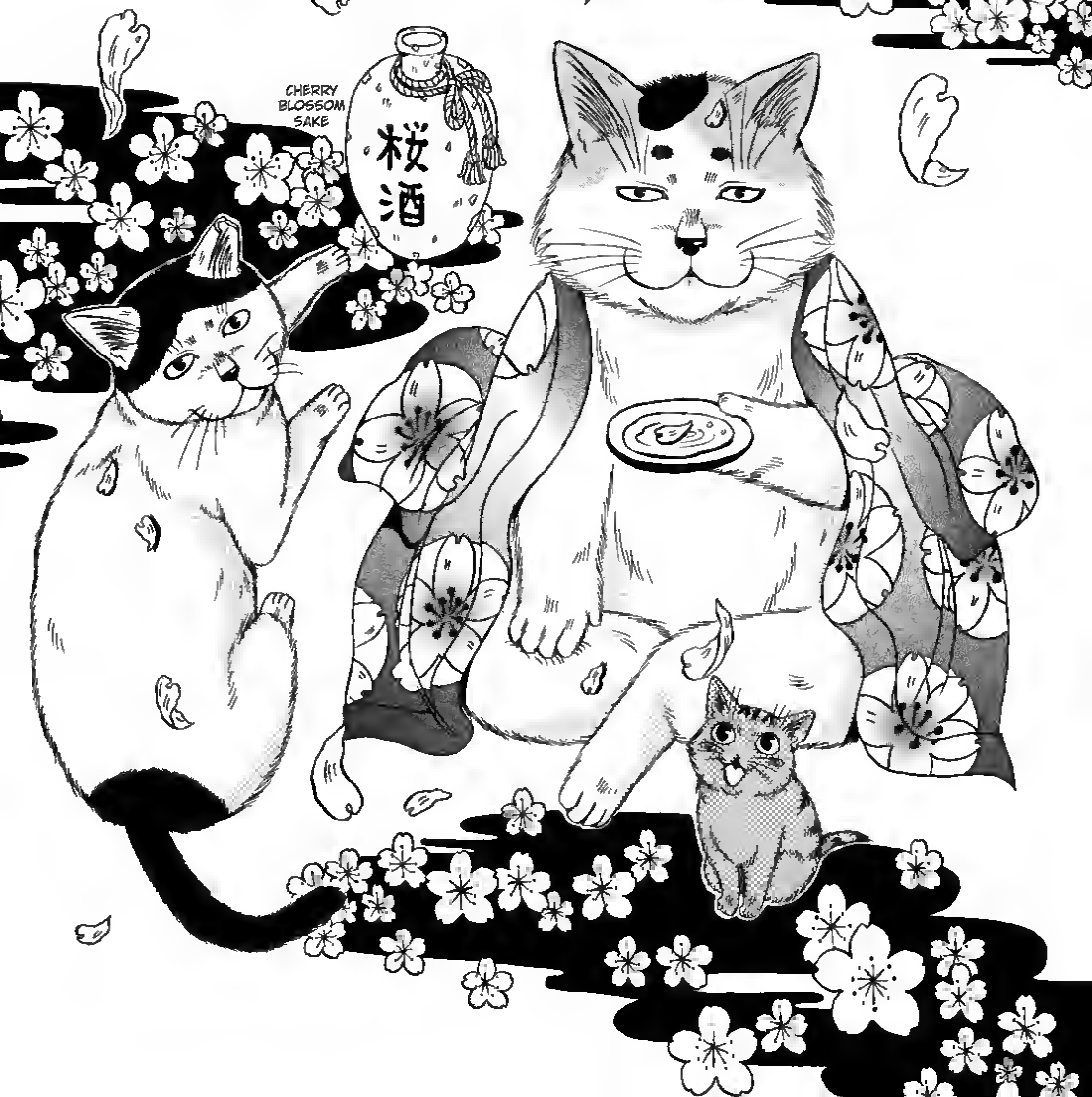
永尾まる
NAGAO MARU

TALES OF A CAT PAINTER

猫絵十兵衛 ～御伽草紙～ 三

ねこえじゅうべえ おとぎそうし

永尾まる NAGAO MARU



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もくじ
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220 …あとのはなし。
OTHER STORIES

NEKOMATA = MYTHICAL TWO-TAILED CAT

TALES OF A CAT PAINTER

猫絵十兵衛
～御伽草紙～

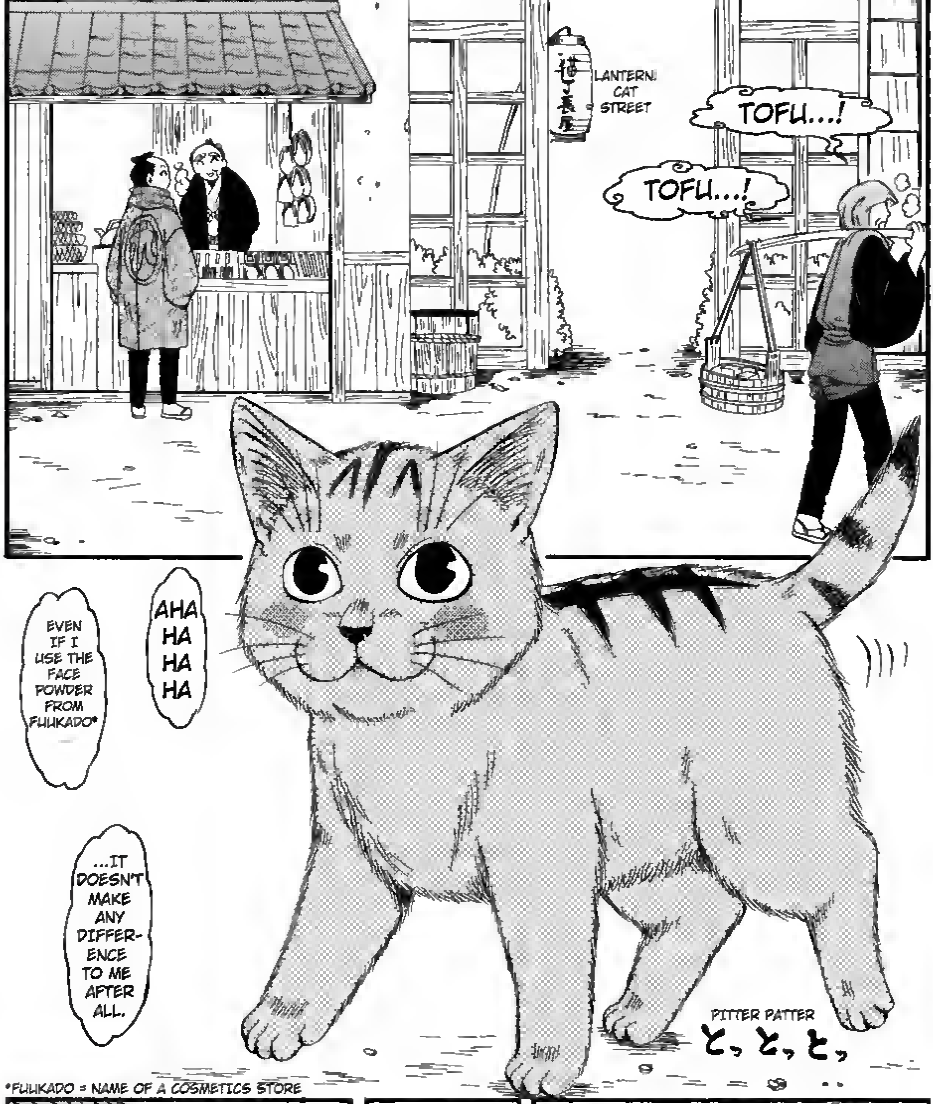
TALES OF A CAT PAINTER

猫絵十兵衛

御伽草紙

ねこえじゅうべえおとぎそうし

TIGER'S DAY
トラ助の一日の巻

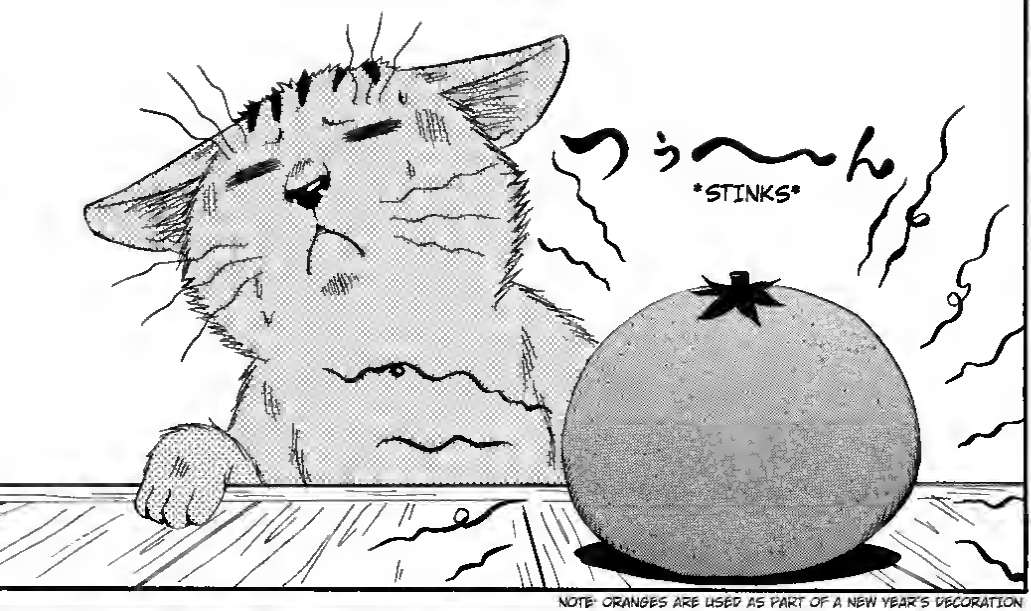

LANTERN CAT STREET
TOFU...!
TOFU...!
EVEN IF I USE THE FACE POWDER FROM FUUKADO*
AHA HA HA HA
...IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO ME AFTER ALL.
PITTER PATTER
とっ とっ とっ

*FUUKADO = NAME OF A COSMETICS STORE

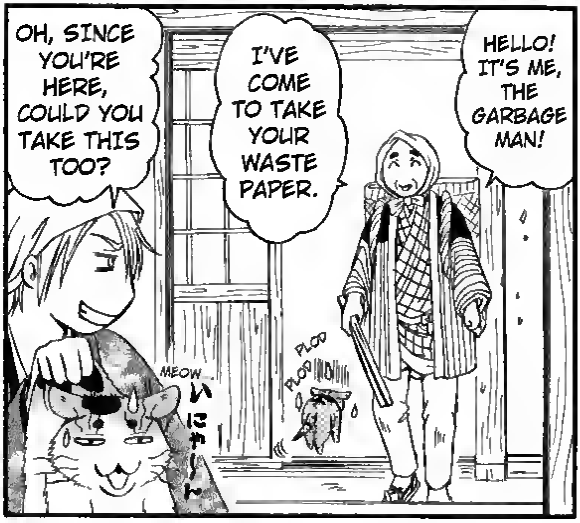
I'M CLEANING, SO GET OUT OF HERE!
HUH...? WHAT ...!?
BUT IN WINTER, CATS ALWAYS LAY AROUND THE KOTATSU ...
JUST CLEAN AROUND ME!
KOTATSU = A HEATED TABLE WITH A BLANKET, AS SHOWN BELOW
WHAT SORT OF A CAT DRINKS SAKE FROM EARLY IN THE MORNING WHILE READING ILLUSTRATED STORY BOOKS?
THERE'S ONE RIGHT HERE.
NYO HO HO HO!
MEW!
GEEZ! YOU LAZY PUNK CAT!

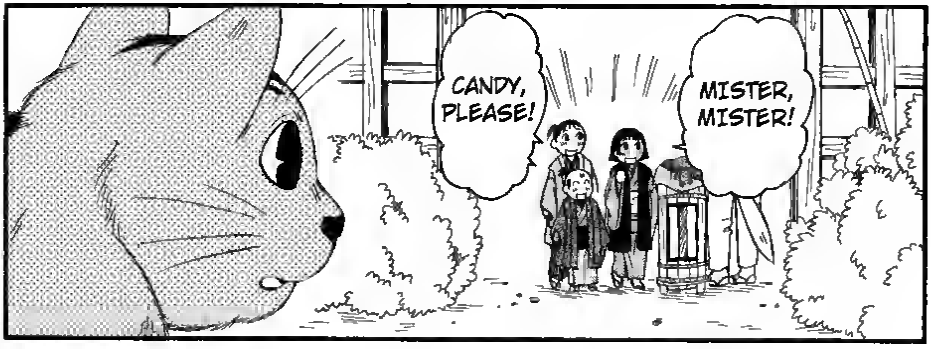
*HANSHIROU IWAI = A LONG LINE OF KABUKI ACTORS USED THIS NAME, DATING BACK TO THE FIRST HANSHIROU IWAI IN THE 17TH CENTURY.

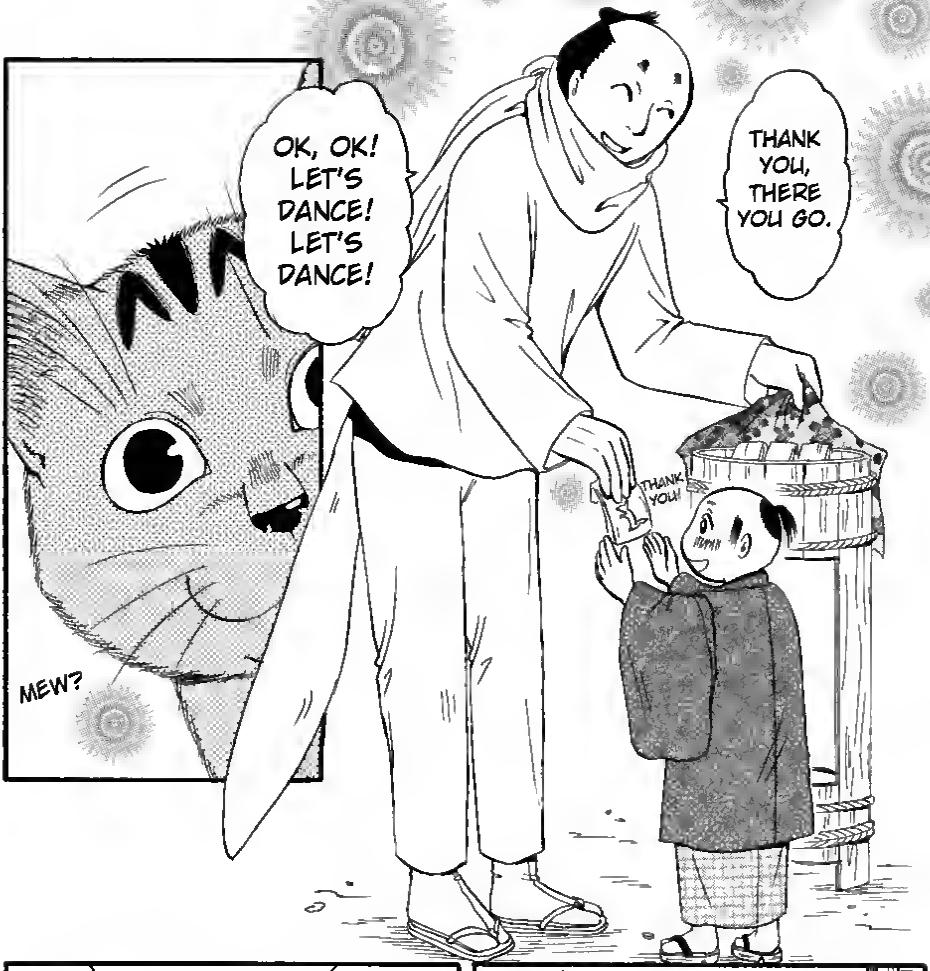
**HANSHIROU IWAI THE 4TH, LIVED FROM 1740 TO 1800

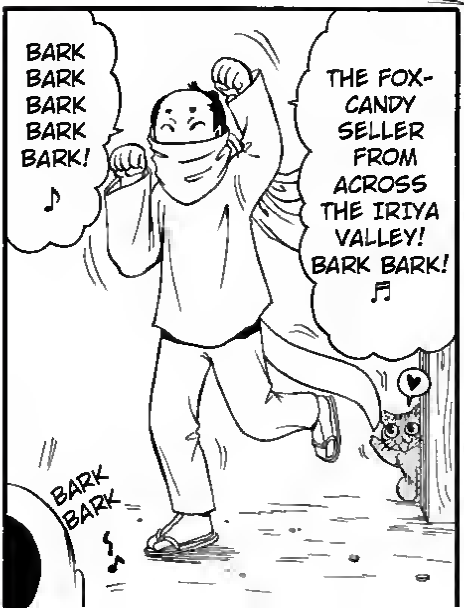


NOTE: ORANGES ARE USED AS PART OF A NEW YEAR'S DECORATION









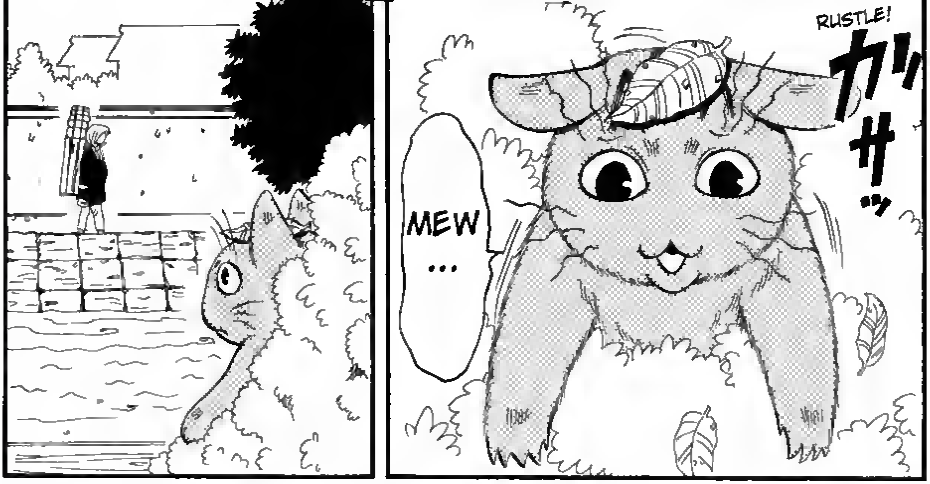
NOTE: THIS IS AN OLD SONG THAT WAS SUNG BY CANDY VENDORS

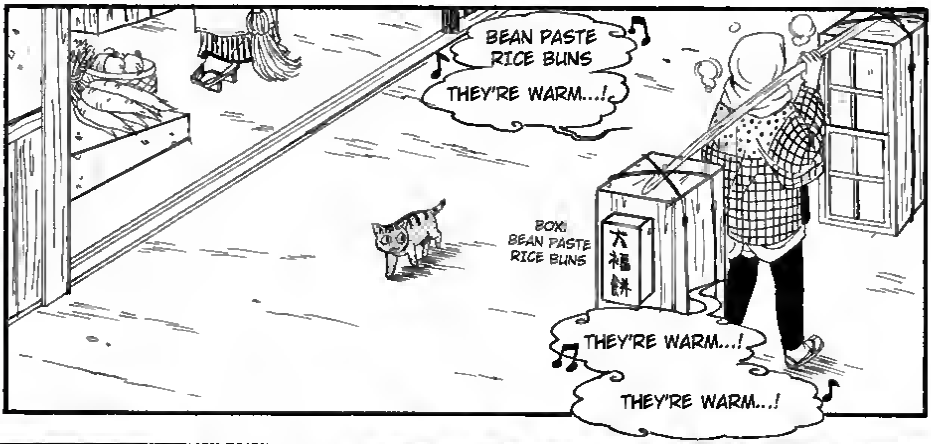
BARK!
AHA HA HA!
BARK BARK! ♪
BARK! ♬
COME AGAIN!
WIGGLE ふり
WIGGLE ふり

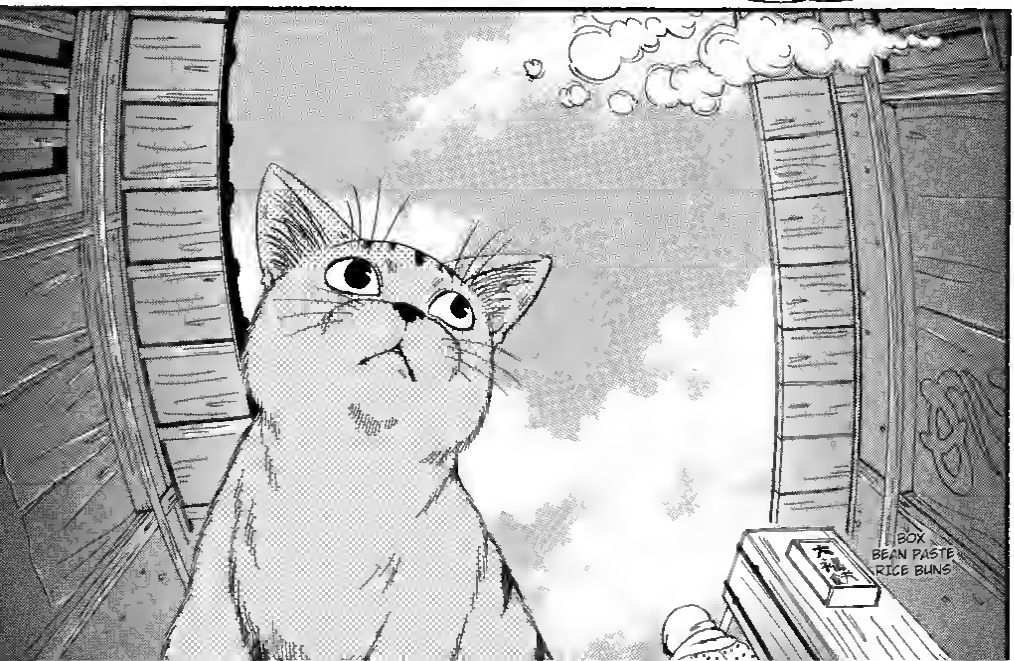
スカッ
MISS
JUMP
ぴょ～ん
MISS
スカッ
JUMP
ぴょ～ん
HA HA HA! LOOK AT THAT!
JUMP
ぴょん
JUMP
ぴょん
?
GIGGLE
くすくす
SO CUTE
MEW!
JUMP
ぴょん
JUMP
ぴょん

OPENS EYES
EEK!
MEW!
PLUNK
ちゃぷ
SWISH
PLUNK
ちゃぷ
WHOOSH!
PAH!

SMACK!
はっちこーん
バシャ
SPLASH!
MEW!
CRASH!
ボスッ
びたん
SLAP!
MEW!
FLAP
びっち
FLAP
びっち
FLAP
びっち
"DRAG DRAG"
ズル ズル
RUSTLE
ガサ
RUSTLE
ガサ
FLAP
びっち
FLAP
びっち
?

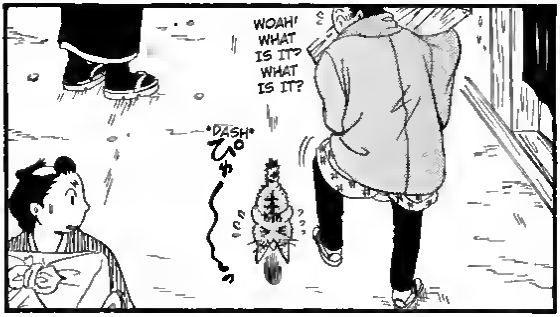

RUSTLE!
カサッ
MEW
...


BEAN PASTE RICE BUNS
THEY'RE WARM...!
BOX: BEAN PASTE RICE BUNS
大福餅
THEY'RE WARM...!
THEY'RE WARM...!

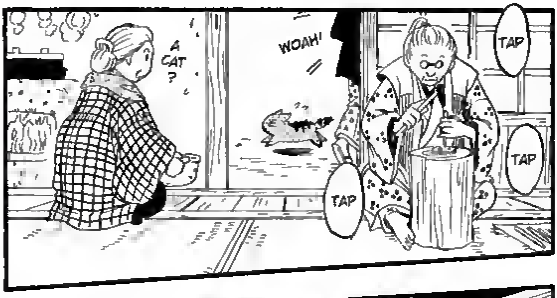

BOX BEAN PASTE RICE BUNS

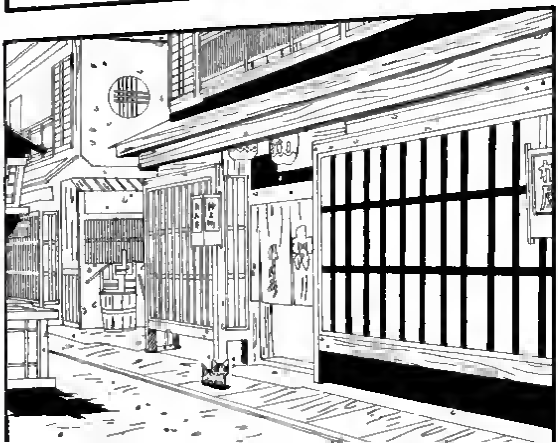
OH, A KITTEN!
MIYO, CATS CAN'T EAT THOSE!
MEW.
HEY, HEY! CAN YOU EAT MANJUU*?
*MANJUU = FILLED YEAST BUNS
MEW ?
?

HISSSS.....!


WOAH! WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS IT?
DASH
ぴゃ〜

HEY, SHIRO! STOP THAT!
あまざけ
SIGN: SWEET SAKE
ぜんざい
SIGN SWEET RED BEAN SOUP
KITTY!
HISS!
EEK!


A CAT?
WOAH!
TAP
TAP
TAP

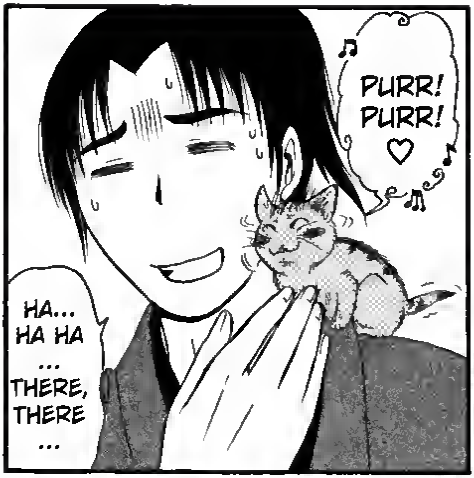


FLUTTER
ヒラッ
MEW
...
?
?
CAT STREET
MEW
...
SHEESH!
...
IT'S SNOWING
?
NO WONDER IT'S SO COLD.

SIGN: TOFU ETC. IN MISO
ごんぎょく
HA HA HA HA!
YOU SHOULDN'T JOKE ABOUT THAT, MR. SAMURAI!
AHA HA HA!
OK!
BRRR... SHALL WE GET SOME WARM SOBA* ON THE WAY BACK?
*SOBA = BUCKWHEAT NOODLES
MEW ...
BUT OLD MAN ...
GOOD GRIEF! IT'S YOU!
GIGGLE!

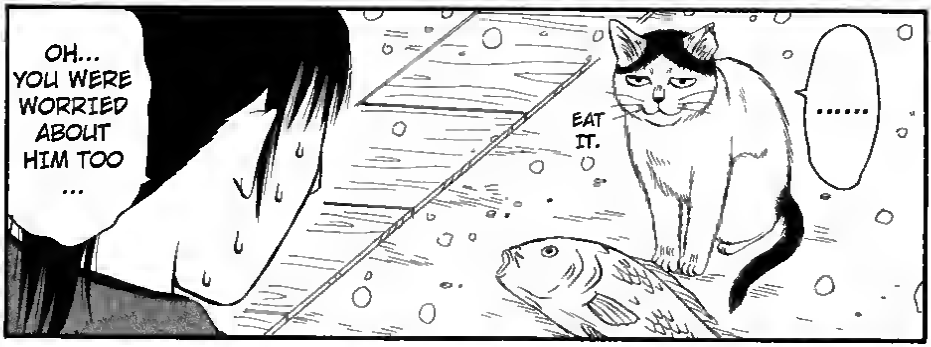
HOW FAR DID YOU GO ON YOUR OUTING?
MEW!
EVERY-ONE'S BEEN LOOKING FOR ...
OH!
HE'S HERE?
IS HE A DOG?
THAT MAN HAS REALLY GOOD INTUITION.
GIGGLE!

TIGER!
I HEARD YOU FOLLOWED THE FOX-CANDY SELLER.
YOU WERE THIS FAR AWAY?
EEK!
I WAS WORRIED ABOUT ...!
CLAWS HIS CLOTHES

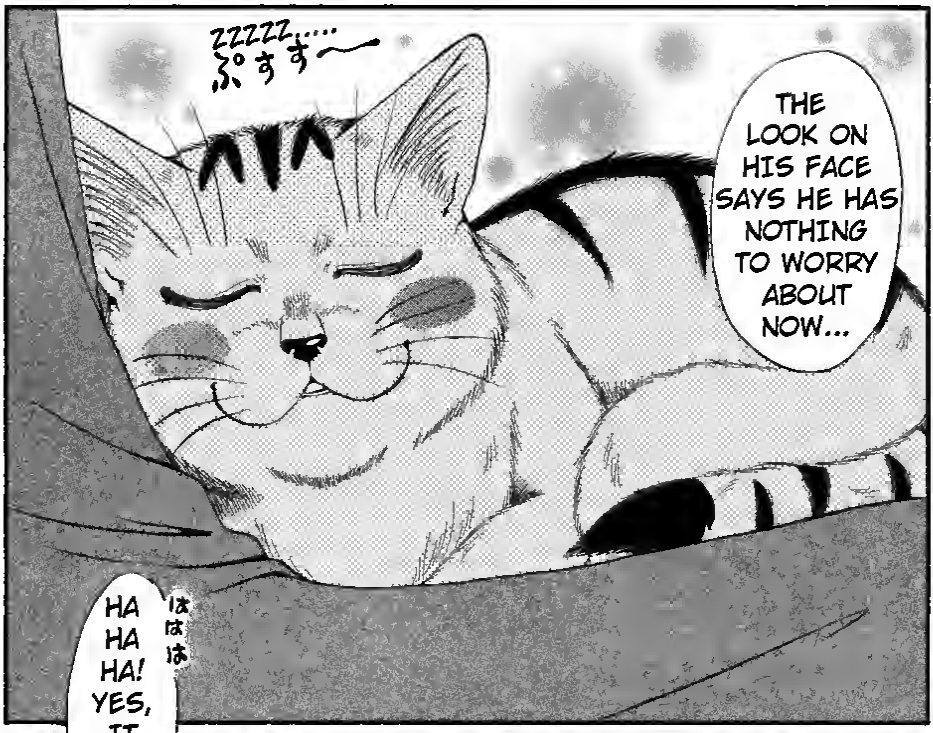

PURR! PURR!
HA... HA HA ... THERE, THERE ...

CLIMB
よじ
よじ
CLIMB

I ALSO HAVE SOMETHING CALLED MENTAL PREPAREDNESS ...
BUT NEXT TIME, DON'T GO JUMPING ONTO ME SO SUDDENLY!
PURR! PURR!
YOU WERE LONELY, WEREN'T YOU?



*NABE = HOT POT WITH VEGETABLES, TOFU, ETC POPULAR IN WINTER.



第十三話 完
END OF CHAPTER 13

TALES OF A
CAT PAINTER

猫絵十兵衛

ねこえじゅうべえおとぎそうし

仲立猫の巻

MATCHMAKER CAT

KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK
SIGN: YOROZUYA

I'M SORRY THAT I'VE COME SO LATE AT NIGHT.
THANK YOU FOR COMING ALL THE WAY HERE.

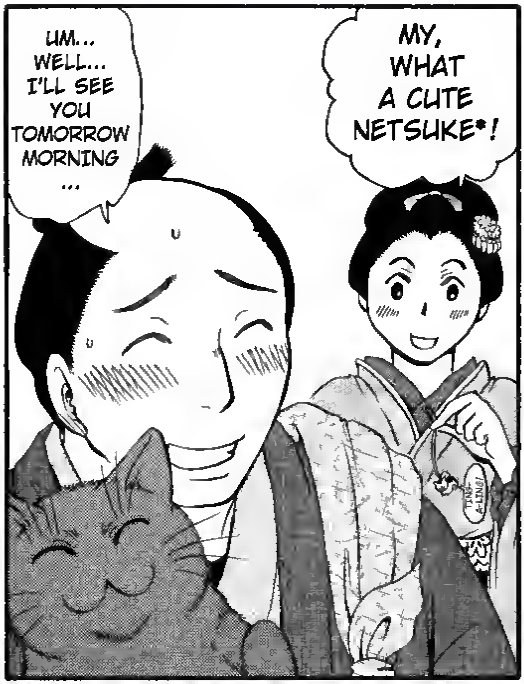
GOOD EVENING! IT'S ME, SASUKE!
I'VE COME TO PICK UP KURO.

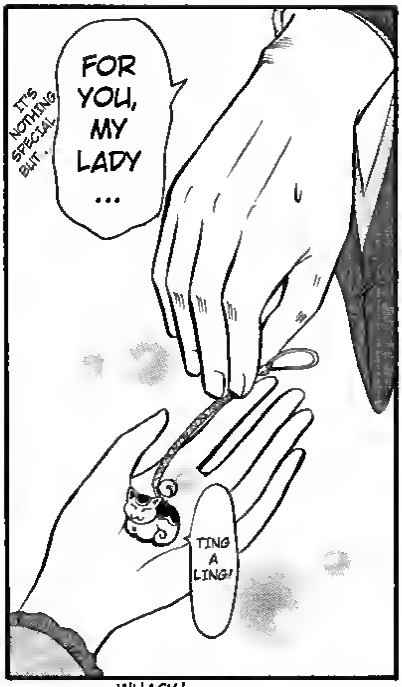
OK!
LADY OTOMO, MR. SASUKE IS HERE.

MY LADY.
YOU'RE LATER TODAY, SASUKE.
MEOW.
AS OF TODAY, I'VE STARTED DOING A TROWEL-ART JOB SOMEWHERE A LITTLE FAR FROM HERE.
WELL...
YOUR TROWEL-ART IS WONDERFUL, MR. SASUKE, BUT...

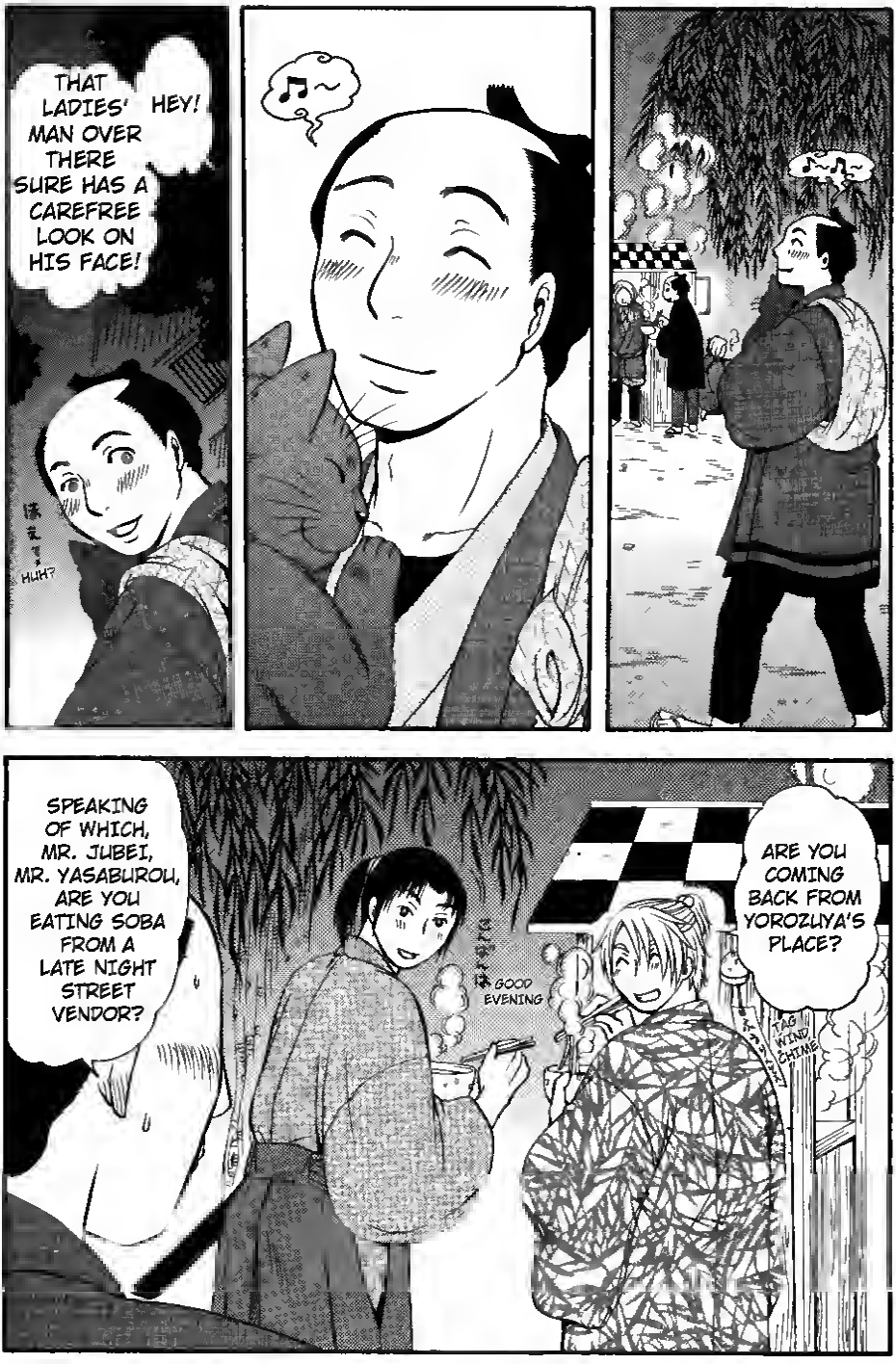
DON'T OVERDO IT.
OH ... OK.
きゅうん♥
"SWOON"
AS EXPECTED OF OUR SAFEGUARD AGAINST MICE!
PURR ...
NO, NO! ONCE AGAIN, THERE WERE NO MICE TODAY!
AH... UH... KURO DIDN'T MAKE ANY BLUNDERS, DID HE?

AH!
?
ERR... UM... NO, NO, NO...
"AWKWARD"
きゃ
しゃ
OH DEAR... WHY DON'T YOU STAY FOR SOME TEA?
AH! I... MUST BE LEAVING NOW...
UH.. I.. ERM ...
HERE! I FOUND THIS NEAR MY WORK-PLACE ...





*NETSUKE = A SMALL DECORATION HANGING FROM A POUCH CORD


THAT LADIES' MAN OVER THERE SURE HAS A CAREFREE LOOK ON HIS FACE!
HEY!
はえ？
HUH?
ARE YOU COMING BACK FROM YOROZUYA'S PLACE?
GOOD EVENING
SPEAKING OF WHICH, MR. JUBEI, MR. YASABUROU, ARE YOU EATING SOBA FROM A LATE NIGHT STREET VENDOR?

OK!
GREAT, I'LL HAVE A BOWL TOO!
WE WERE A LITTLE HUNGRY.
THAT'S THE SAME NAME AS THE CAT THAT CHASED AWAY THE PLAGUE OF MICE THAT ATTACKED YOROZUYA'S PLACE RECENTLY!
KURO, YOU SAY?
THANKS, THAT WAS DELICIOUS!
YEAH, HE'S PRETTY FAMOUS IN THIS DISTRICT!
HIS NAME IS KURO.
HE SURE DOES ...
PURR ...
HEY, BUDDY, YOUR CAT LOOKS LIKE A BIG BOTA-MOCHI*!
.....
IT'S ACTUALLY RIGHT HERE
ホントはココ
WHAT AN AMAZING CAT!
IT'S RUMORED TO BE A DESCENDENT OF A CAT BROUGHT FROM THE T'SANG DYNASTY* BY MONK KUUKAI**.

*BOTAMOCHI - RICE BUN MADE WITH RED BEAN PASTE, GIVING IT A DARK COLOR.

*CHINA, 618-907 A.D.
**MONK KUUKAI = A RENOWNED BUDDHIST MONK

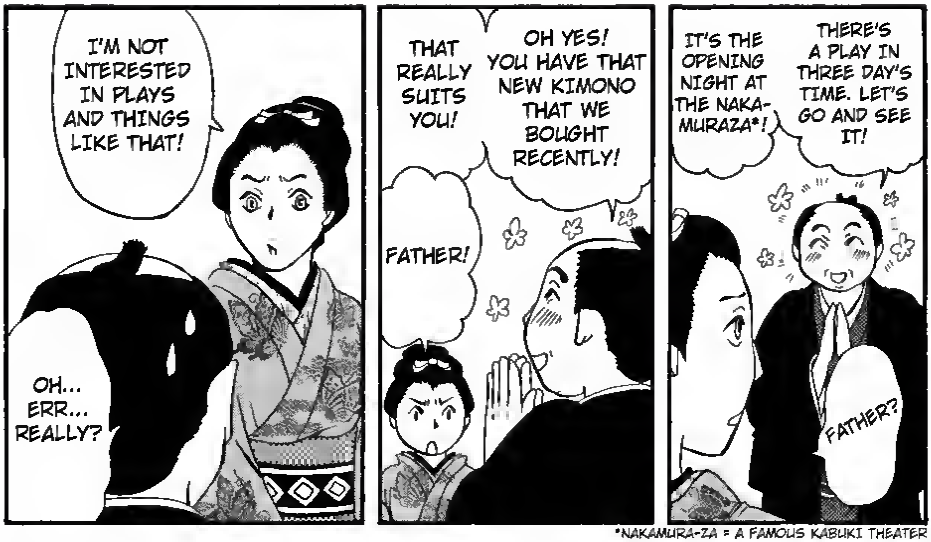
HAH! I ENVY THEM!
YEAH, A CAT THAT IS GOOD AT CATCHING MICE CAN BE TRADED FOR A GOOD PRICE.
IF IT WAS SOLD, IT WOULD DEFINITELY BE EXPEN-SIVE.
HA HA HA! THAT SOUNDS GOOD!
IF I HAD A CAT, I COULD SELL IT AND GO AND HAVE FUN IN THE PLEASURE DISTRICT!
RIGHT, MR. JUBEI?
AH
HMM ...
WHEN THEY GET PASSED ON LIKE THAT ...
DEAR ME! RUMORS CAN BE A TERRIBLE THING!
GEEZ, HOW WOULD THIS GUY FETCH A GOOD PRICE?
I GOT HIM FOR FREE WHEN I TOOK HIM IN!
HOWL...

N...
HMM? ARE YOU SHY?
... NOTHING'S GOING ON...
RIGHT, RIGHT?

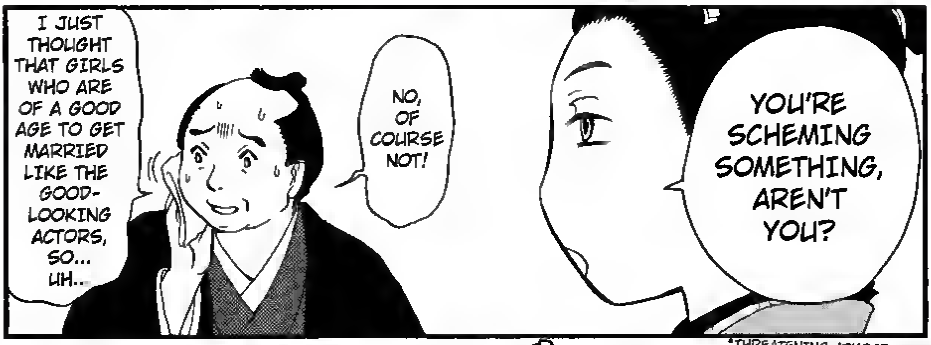
D... DON'T BE RIDIC-ULOUS!
HAVE YOU HELD HANDS?
WELL, WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS HOW THINGS ARE GOING WITH MISS OMOTO.
TEE HEE HEE

NOW, IT'S ONLY...
I'M JUST A PLASTERER AND SHE'S THE DAUGHTER OF THE OWNER OF A LARGE STORE.
SOONER OR LATER, HER FATHER WILL CHOOSE SOMEWHERE FOR HER TO GO AND GET MARRIED.

...THANKS TO KURO THAT I CAN SEE HER FACE EVERY DAY ...
...AND SPEAK TO HER.
SIGN YOROZUYA
万屋
I'M HAPPY ENOUGH ...
... WITH JUST THAT.
MEOW.
RIGHT?
OMOTO
OMOTO


I'M NOT INTERESTED IN PLAYS AND THINGS LIKE THAT!
OH... ERR... REALLY?
THAT REALLY SUITS YOU!
OH YES! YOU HAVE THAT NEW KIMONO THAT WE BOUGHT RECENTLY!
FATHER!
IT'S THE OPENING NIGHT AT THE NAKA-MURAZA*!
THERE'S A PLAY IN THREE DAY'S TIME. LET'S GO AND SEE IT!
FATHER?

*NAKAMURA-ZA = A FAMOUS KABUKI THEATER


I JUST THOUGHT THAT GIRLS WHO ARE OF A GOOD AGE TO GET MARRIED LIKE THE GOOD-LOOKING ACTORS, SO... UH..
NO, OF COURSE NOT!
YOU'RE SCHEMING SOMETHING, AREN'T YOU?

THREATENING ATMOSPHERE

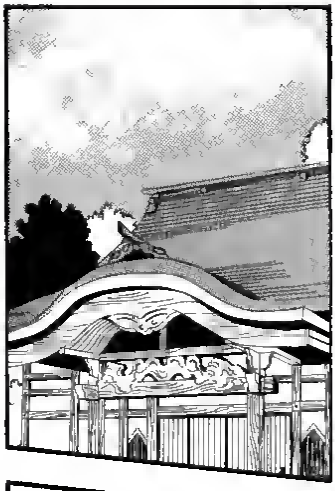
NOTE: MARRIAGE INTERVIEWS WERE VERY COMMON IN JAPAN DURING THE EDO PERIOD.

I KNOW YOU HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO INTENTION OF REFUSING!
HA! HOW NAIVE!
AH ... UH ...
HOW DID SHE GROW UP TO BE SUCH A SMART GIRL?
I WOULDN'T BE SEEN DEAD GOING TO A MARRIAGE MEETING!
WHILE WE'RE THERE TO SEE THE PLAY, THERE'S SOMEONE I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET, JUST BRIEFLY.
WE CAN REFUSE LATER ...
GASP! はっ
OH... MY LADY ...
COULD YOU TRY ASKING HER TO GO AND SEE THE PLAY FOR ME?
EH? ME?
OH MY! MR. SASUKE, KURO, WELCOME!
SASUKE...
PURR... ぐ～っ
OH HO HO HO! オホホホ

UMM...
UH...
THERE'S ...
YES, YES!
OMOTO BECOMES STRANGELY DOCILE IN FRONT OF SASUKE!
THERE'S NO NEED TO SAY THAT!

I ...
I ...
I THINK ...

I THINK THAT YOU SHOULD ... DO AS THE MASTER SAYS...
MR. SASUKE, YOU IDIOT !!
SA...
SA...?
THAT WAY ...
WELL SAID, SASUKE!
WHOOSH!
PURR...
WOAH!
... MY LADY WILL MOST CERTAINLY BE HAPPY...
GULP



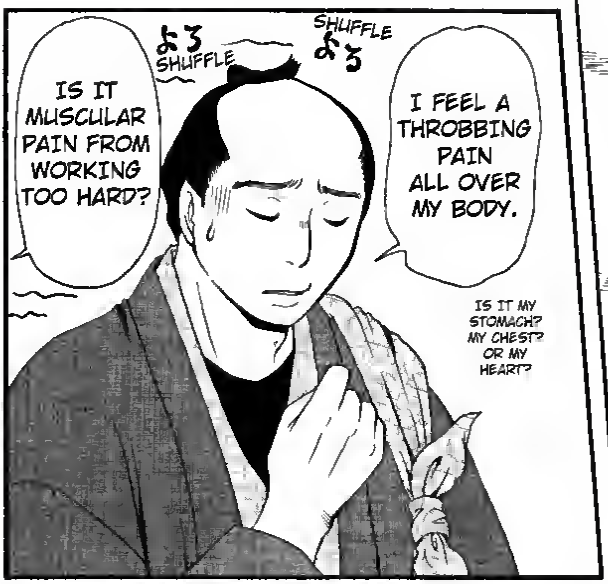
ANYWAY, IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO ASKS ME, I'M NOT GOING!
HEY! YOU MUSTN'T THROW HIM!
PURR PURR PURR

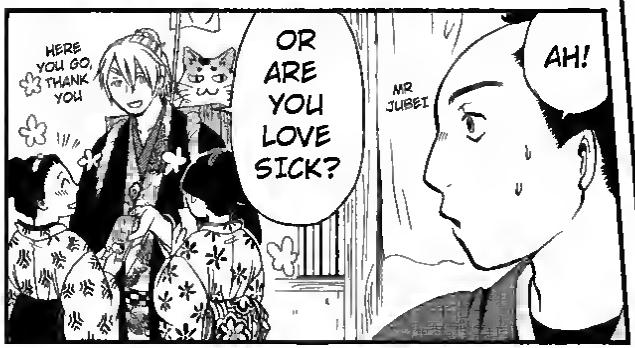
"CATCH"
MEOW.

"SIGH"

LADY OMOTO ...
MEOOOW...
THUD
ズ
THUD
ズ
TING A LING!
TING A LING!

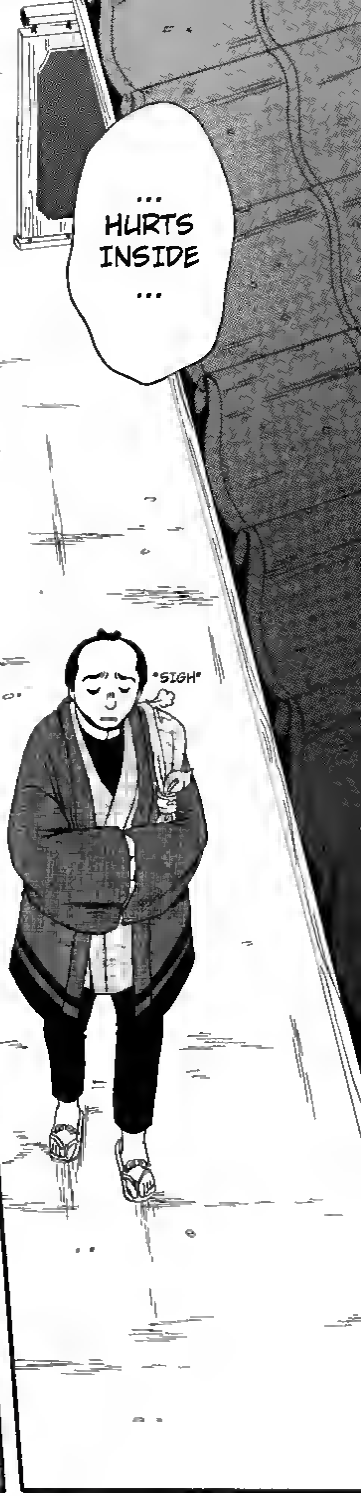
I'M SORRY I THREW YOU EARLIER.
PURR PURR PURR
KURO ...
MEOW...
I WONDER IF MR. SASUKE ...
... DOES NOT LIKE ME AS MUCH AS I THOUGHT ...
PURR PURR PURR
PURR PURR PURR
IT REALLY ...


SHUFFLE
SHUFFLE
IS IT MUSCULAR PAIN FROM WORKING TOO HARD?
I FEEL A THROBBING PAIN ALL OVER MY BODY.
IS IT MY STOMACH? MY CHEST? OR MY HEART?


HERE YOU GO, THANK YOU
OR ARE YOU LOVE SICK?
MR JUBEI
AH!

I SEE ...
HMM ...

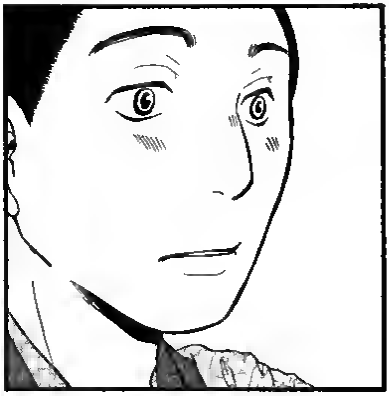
I HIT THE MARK?


... HURTS INSIDE ...
SIGH

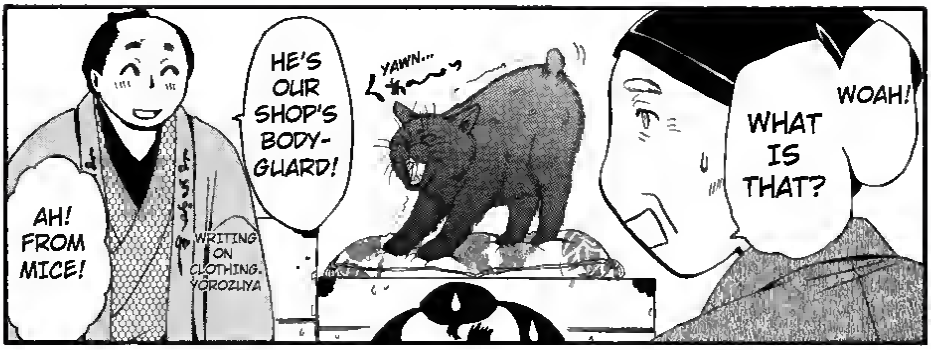
WELL, I'LL SAY ONE THING ...
YOU'RE AN IDIOT.
WHAT A HALF-WIT!
うぐぅ
UGH...
WH.. WH.. WH.. WH... WHY?
IT IS SAID THAT "IN LOVE, ALL ARE EQUAL*", RIGHT?
BUT, THE TRUTH IS...
TEN YEARS.
HUH?
MR. SASUKE, YOU AND MISS OMOTO WILL BE MIDDLE AGED.
OR TWENTY YEARS,
*FROM A JAPANESE PROVERB, WHICH MAINLY REFERS TO SOCIAL STATUS
IF YOU FOLLOW YOUR DESIRES, THEN SOCIAL STATUS OR ANYTHING ELSE WILL NO LONGER BE AN ISSUE.
RATHER THAN TEDIOUSLY FUSSING OVER YOUR SOCIAL POSITION ...

IT'S PRETTY SHAME-FUL...
HA HA HA ...
I'VE BEEN WORRYING ABOUT IT MYSELF
NOT EVEN A DOCTOR, OR THE HOT SPRINGS OF KUSATSU* CAN HEAL LOVESICKNESS!
♬ HEY HEY!

*KUSATSU'S HOT SPRINGS ARE BELIEVED TO BE ABLE TO CURE ALMOST ANY ILLNESS OR INJURY



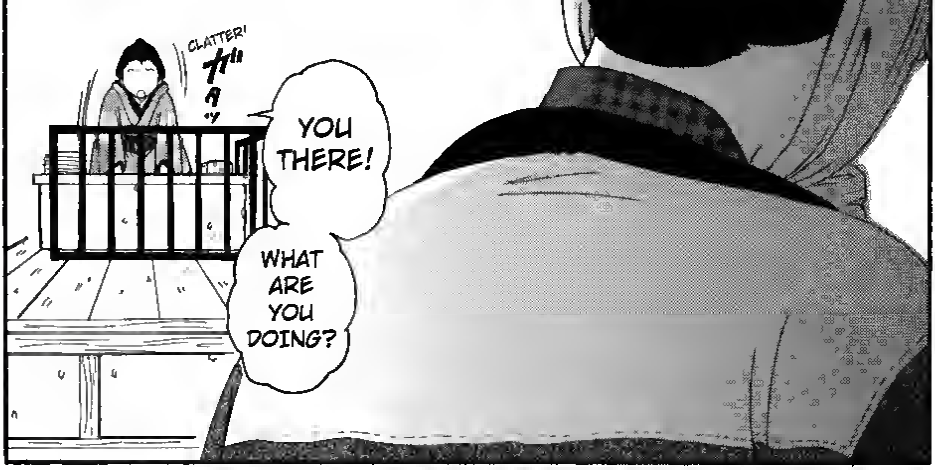
SIGN YOROZUYA
HELLO!
WELCOME!
HELLO, ANYBODY THERE?
MEOW.


WOAH!
WHAT IS THAT?
YAWN...
HE'S OUR SHOP'S BODY-GUARD!
AH! FROM MICE!
WRITING ON CLOTHING. YOROZUYA

HE LOOKS LIKE RATHER A "JOLLY" CAT, DOESN'T HE?
OMOTO!

I WANT A CAT TOO ...
HEY -HO!
HA HA HA HA! WE CAN'T SELL KURO.

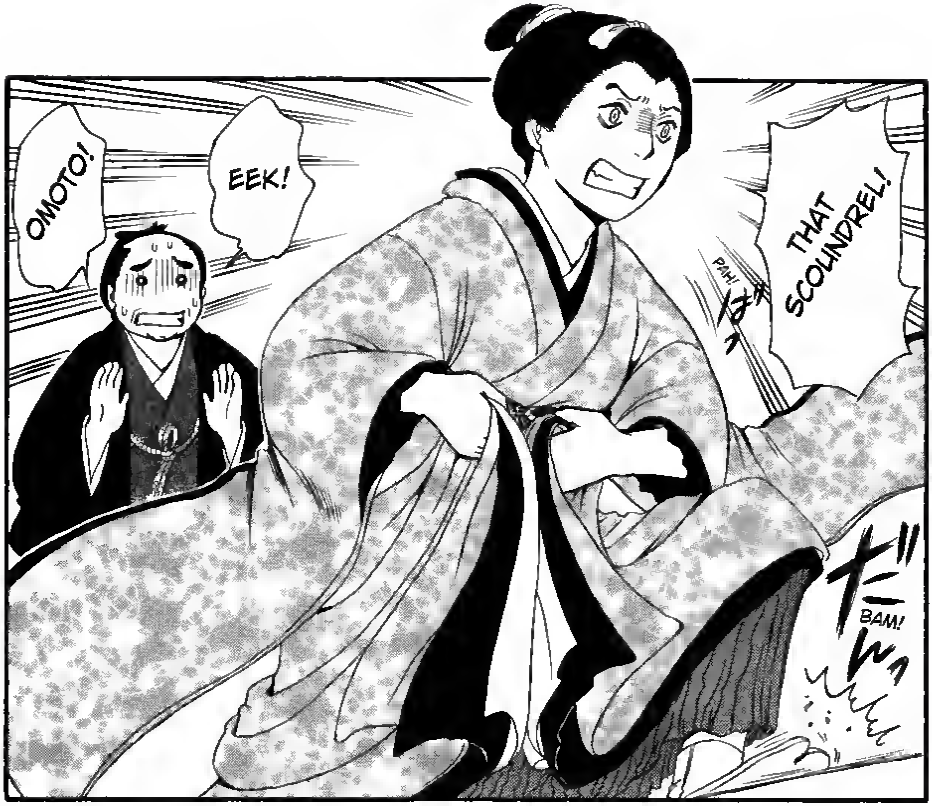
SAY, WE HAVE MANY THINGS TO PREPARE ...
HRMM
DON'T WE?
SHUP

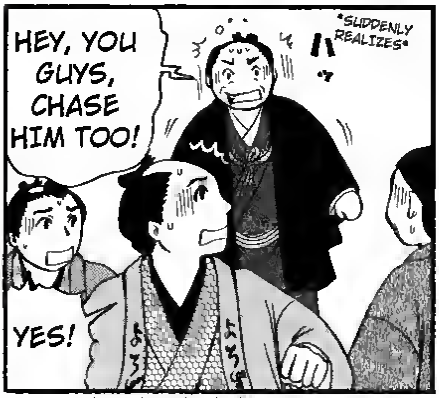

CLATTER!
YOU THERE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

MEOW?

CAT THIEF!
PUNCH

WAIT!

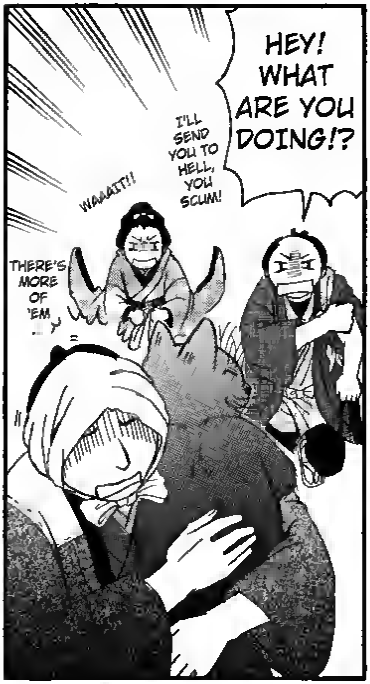




WRITING ON CLOTHING YOROZUYA

I'M GONNA GO THERE AND TELL HER STRAIGHT!
YEAH!
YOU'RE GOING TO YOROZUYA'S PLACE NOW AREN'T YOU?
I'M A BIT NERVOUS, THOUGH ...
TA TA TA TA TA TA
HEY!
EH?
TA TA TA TA TA TA
IF YOU DON'T ...
GIVE KURO BACK!
MEOW.
HE'S HEAVY

ひいいいい
EEEEEK!
...I WILL SHOW YOU A LIVING HELL!
AH...
LET'S GO! WE'LL CUT HIM OFF ON THE OTHER SIDE!
HMM?
JUBEI
MY LADY!
EEEEEK!


HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?
I'LL SEND YOU TO HELL, YOU SCUM!
WAAAIT!!
THERE'S MORE OF 'EM...

HE MOST LIKELY WANTS TO SELL KURO!
HUH !?
MEOW

KURO'S BEEN STOLEN!
WHA... WHAT HAPPENED?

KURO!
PURR...
CRASH!
SCRAPE
GAH!
PEEPS OUT FROM BEHIND THE WALL
MEOW.
HE'S HEAVY!
SHLIP!

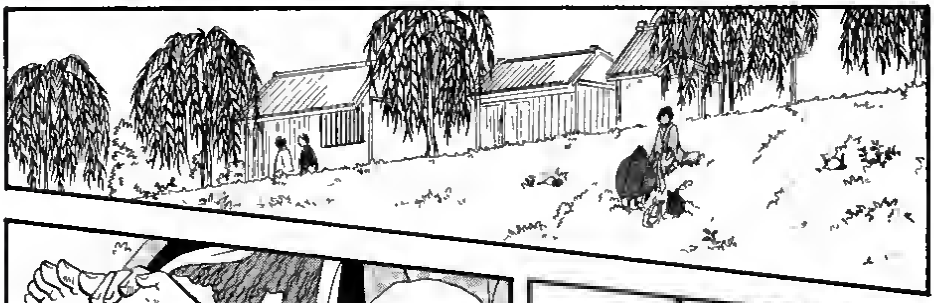
KURO
...
PURR...
ん～

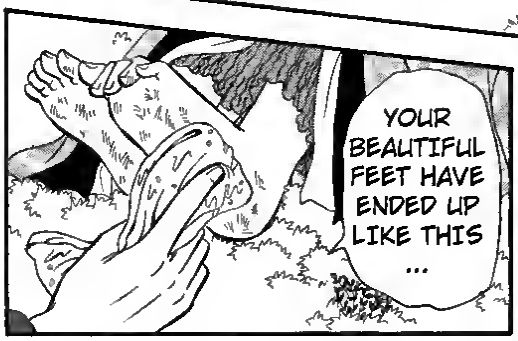
MRAOOW!!
HMM ...?
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
ERK!

CLACK!

I'M SO GLAD HE'S OK.
"SNEAK"
こそ～

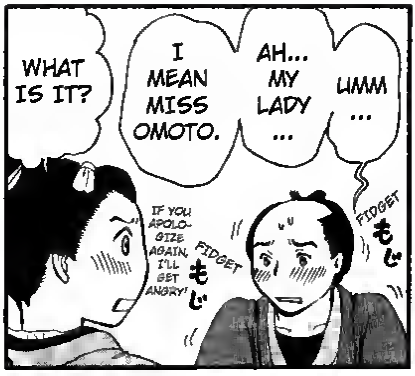
I'M HEADING BACK TO YOROZUYA, SEE YOU THERE LATER.
AH
OK.
TAKE CARE OF MISS OMOTO.
EEK
DRAG
DRAG
LANTERN
SAKE




YOUR BEAUTIFUL FEET HAVE ENDED UP LIKE THIS ...

I'M THE ONE WHO SHOULD APOLO-GIZE!
STOP IT!
I'M SORRY, MY LADY.

HUH ?
I... I'LL WORK HARDER!


WHAT IS IT?
I MEAN MISS OMOTO.
AH... MY LADY ...
UMM ...
IF YOU APOLOGIZE AGAIN, I'LL GET ANGRY!
FIDGET もじ
FIDGET もじ

PLEASE DON'T GO ...

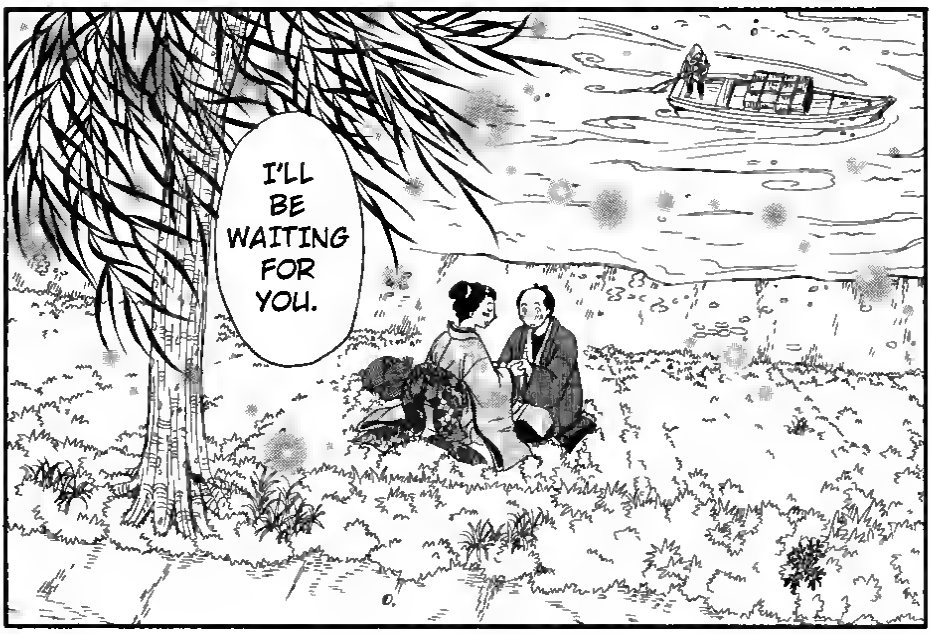
SO ...

I'LL DO A LOT OF WORK ...
AND SAVE MONEY ...
AND DO MY BEST SO THAT THE MASTER WILL ACCEPT ME.

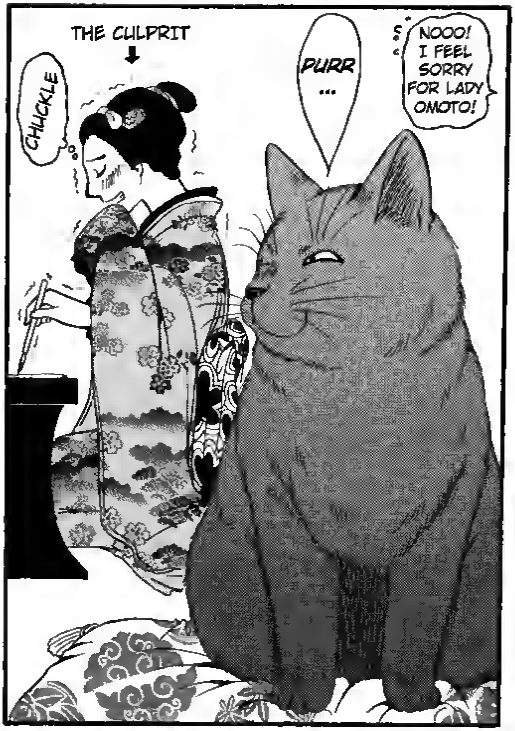
...TO MARRIAGE INTERVIEWS OR SUCH THINGS.
AND THEN ...
... BECOME MY BRIDE.
SO, UNTIL THE TIME COMES WHEN I AM ACCEPTED ...
WAIT FOR ME...

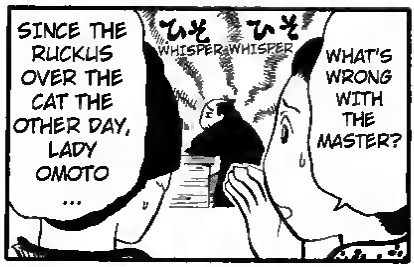
IT'S ALRIGHT IF THEY BECOME MORE WRINKLED ...

I ...
REALLY LIKE YOUR HANDS, MR. SASUKE.


I'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU.

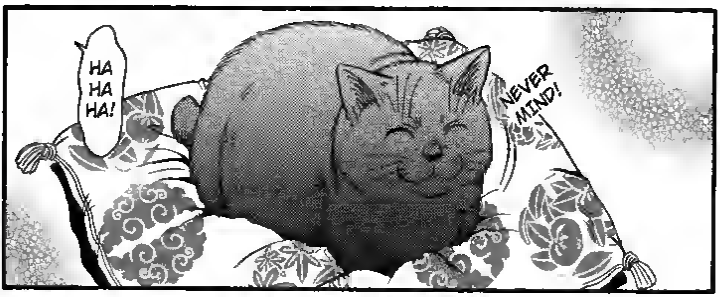
ALRIGHT!
LET'S BOTH DO OUR BEST TOGETHER!
Y... YEAH!
M.. M.. M.. M.. MISS OMOTO ...
BUT JUST WAITING DOESN'T SUIT ME ...
I'LL DO MY BEST TOO!
I MIGHT START A NEW BUSINESS AT SOME POINT!
UH... YES!
COME ON, PUT MORE ENERGY INTO IT!
YEAH!
SIGN: YOROZUYA
SIGN: YOROZUYA





WHO ON EARTH PUT IT IN THE KAWARABAN NEWS?
LADY MAKES AN ARREST
OMOTO YOROZUYA
HAS BEEN ALL OVER THE KAWARABAN* NEWS, SO THERE HAVEN'T BEEN ANY MORE MARRIAGE MEETINGS.

*KAWARABAN = EDO PERIOD EQUIVALENT OF NEWSPAPERS, PRINTED USING TILES



第十四話 完

END OF CHAPTER 14

TALES OF A CAT PAINTER

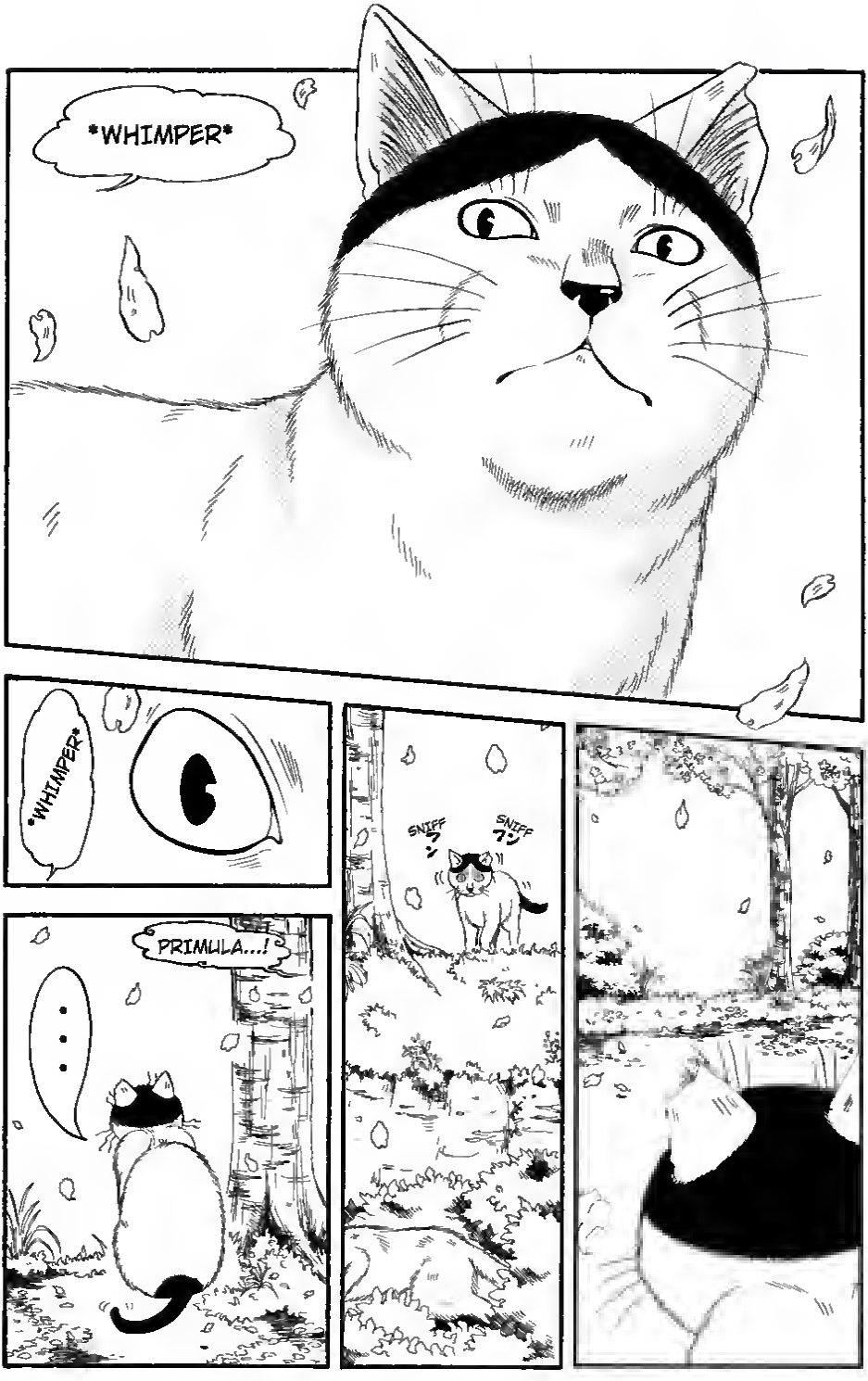
猫絵十兵衛

御伽草紙

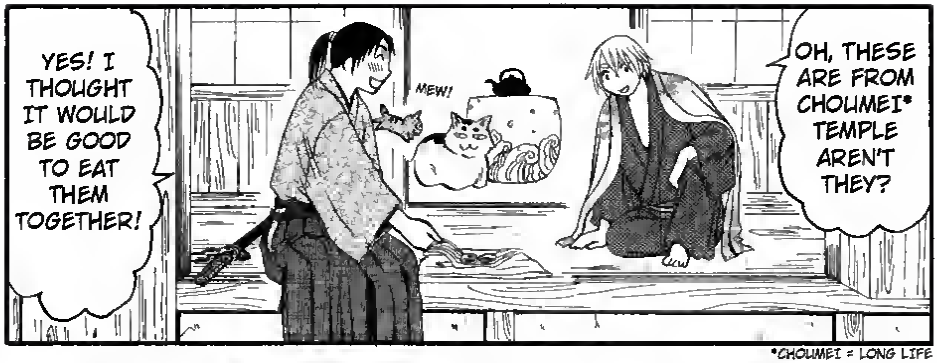
母者猫の巻（ははじゃねこ）

MOTHER CAT

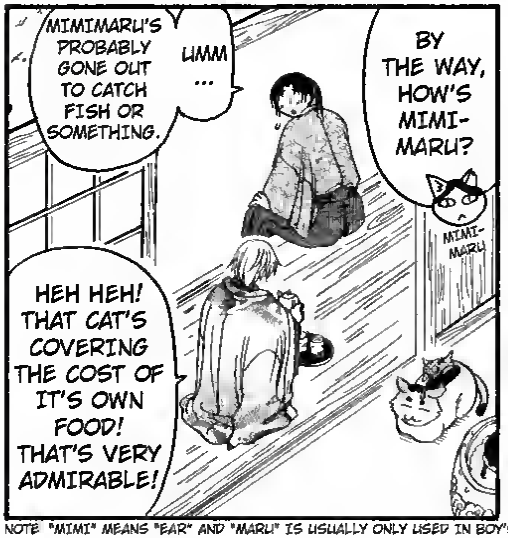
GET YOUR PRIMULA!
PRIMULA...!
GET YOUR PRIMULA!
PRIMULA...!


WHIMPER
WHIMPER
SNIFF
SNIFF
PRIMULA...!
...

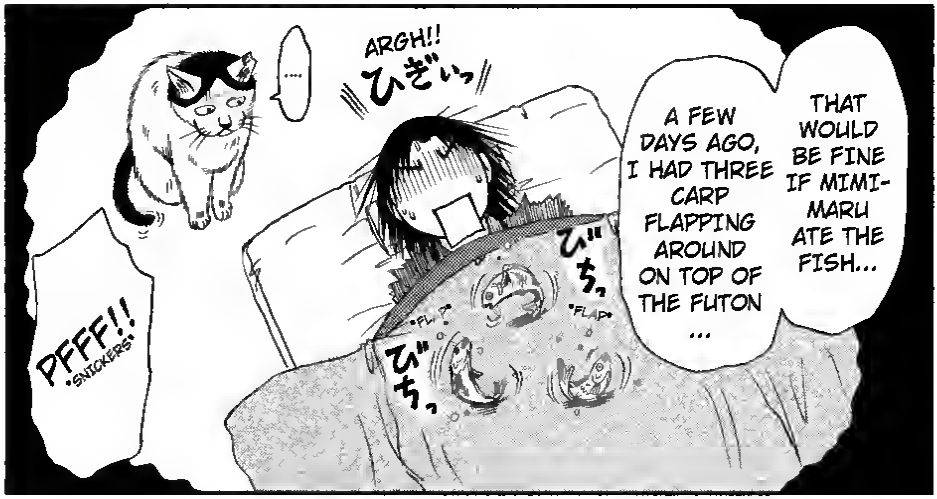
MR. JUBEI
MR JUBEI!
SIGN
CAT PICTURES
JUBEI
MR. NISHI-URA
I'VE BROUGHT SOME CHERRY BLOSSOM RICE BUNS FROM MR. KOBAYASHI.
MEW
うにゃ～



*CHOUMEI = LONG LIFE


MIMIMARU'S PROBABLY GONE OUT TO CATCH FISH OR SOMETHING.
UMM ...
BY THE WAY, HOW'S MIMI-MARU?
MIMI-MARU
HEH HEH! THAT CAT'S COVERING THE COST OF IT'S OWN FOOD! THAT'S VERY ADMIRABLE!

NOTE "MIMI" MEANS "EAR" AND "MARU" IS USUALLY ONLY USED IN BOY'S NAMES.



...
MAYBE MIMIMARU IS TEACHING YOU HOW TO HUNT.
HUNT?
DON'T LAUGH!
PFF!! SORRY, SORRY.
IT'S JUST THAT ...
HAVEN'T YOU SEEN THAT BEFORE?
ANIMALS GIVE WEAKENED PREY TO THEIR CHILDREN SO THAT THEY CAN LEARN HOW TO HUNT.
HAA THAT'S SO FUNNY
I... I'M MIMI-MARU'S CHILD?

I KNOW, I KNOW!
BWA HA HA!
HMMM...
I..I..I.. I'M A MATURE ADULT WHO HAS COMPLETED THE CEREMONY OF MANHOOD!
"CHEW" かぶ
"CHEW" かぶ
URK!
THAT'S RIGHT. MIMIMARU PROBABLY THINKS YOU'RE JUST A GREAT BIG KID WHO CAN'T HUNT.
HA HA HA!
ぷぷぷ
"SLIDE"
SIGN CAT PICTURES HERE!
THANKS FOR THE FOOD!

WHIMPER

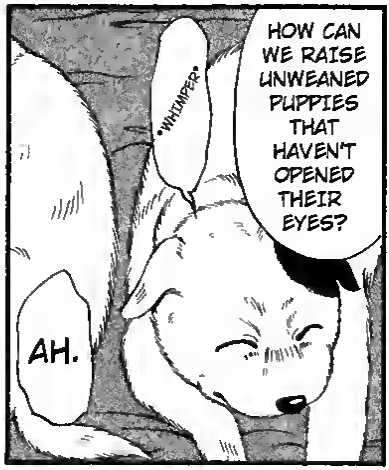
MEW!
うにゃん

SQUEAL!

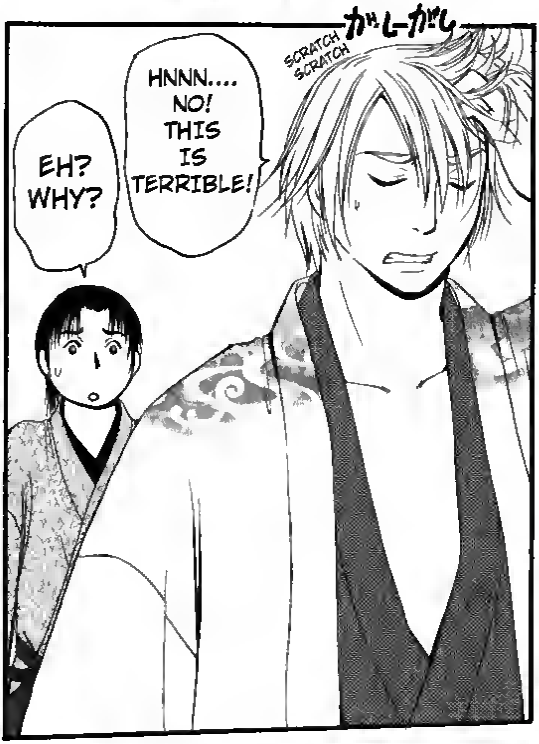
MEOOOOW!!
"DROP"
ポト
CRASH!
ドタッ
ばりぃっ
RIIIIP!!
ハ
タ
ン!!
BAM!!
YOU DO THIS EVERY TIME!
AGAIN, YASABUROU?

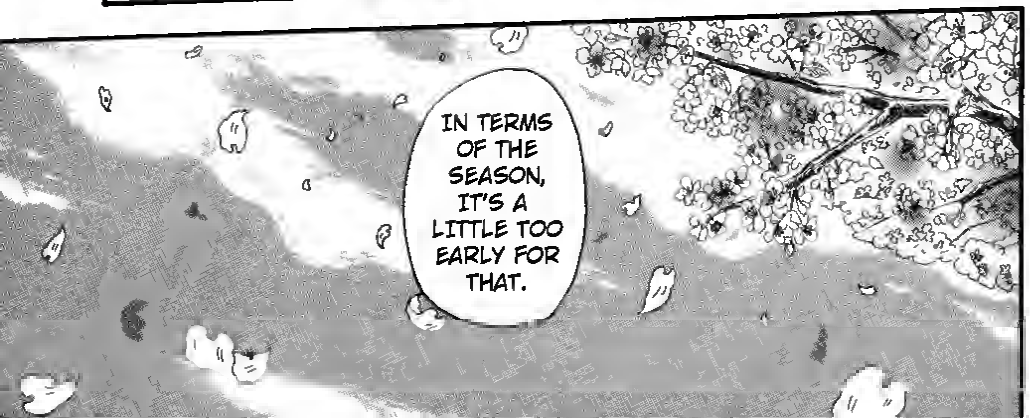
MR. JUBEI !!
WOAH!
-SUDDENLY JUMPS UP-
I CAN'T HUNT PUPPIES!
HUH?
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN EAT THEM!
CALM DOWN MR. NISHI-URA.
GEEZ... THAT GUY IS SO NOISY.
SQUEAL

THIS ISN'T FOOD, MIMIMARU'S TAKEN IN THESE PUPPIES THAT HAVE LOST THEIR MOTHER.
"PUPPIES, HUH?
WELL, THAT'S OK THEN.


HOW CAN WE RAISE UNWEANED PUPPIES THAT HAVEN'T OPENED THEIR EYES?
WHIMPER
AH.

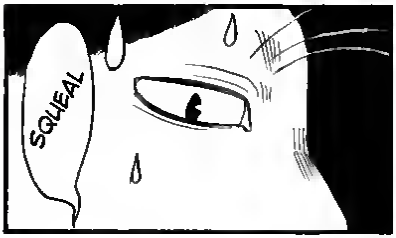
A... UH... HOW ABOUT A WET NURSE DOG?
HMMM ...

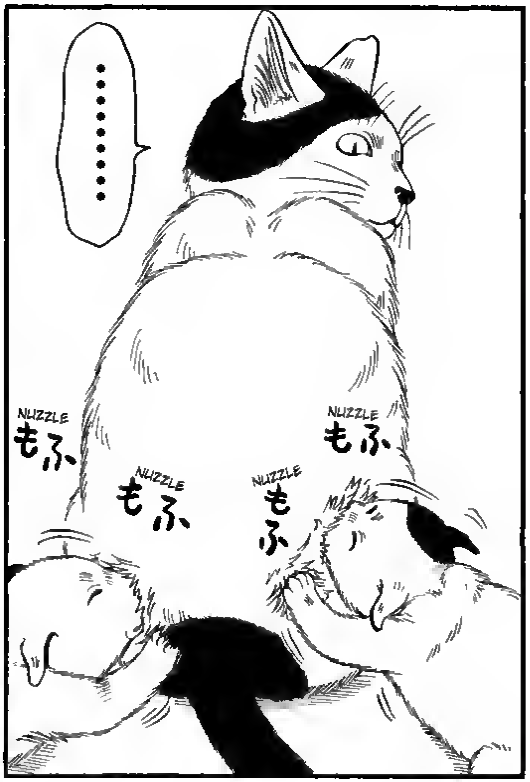

カリカリ
SCRATCH SCRATCH
HNNN.... NO! THIS IS TERRIBLE!
EH? WHY?


IN TERMS OF THE SEASON, IT'S A LITTLE TOO EARLY FOR THAT.

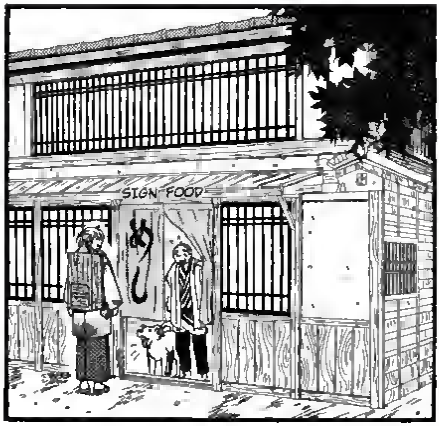
RICE WATER = IN THE EDO PERIOD, THERE WAS NO ARTIFICIAL MILK, SO THIS WAS GIVEN INSTEAD. IT'S NOT AS NUTRITIOUS AS MILK, SO DON'T COPY THIS!

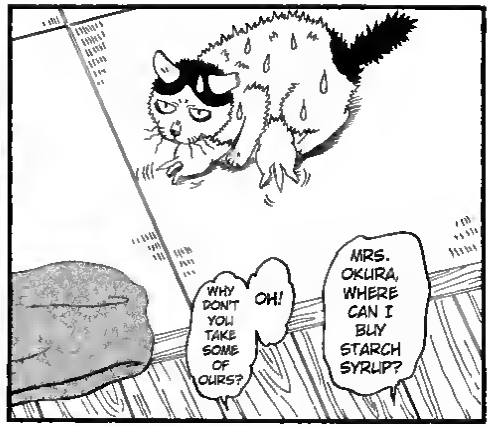
AH, OK!
MR. NISHIURA, TRY TO GET THEM TO DRINK SOME STARCH SYRUP DISSOLVED IN RICE WATER.
IT CAN'T BE HELPED. I'LL TRY TO THINK OF SOMETHING ...
ALSO, WARM IT UP



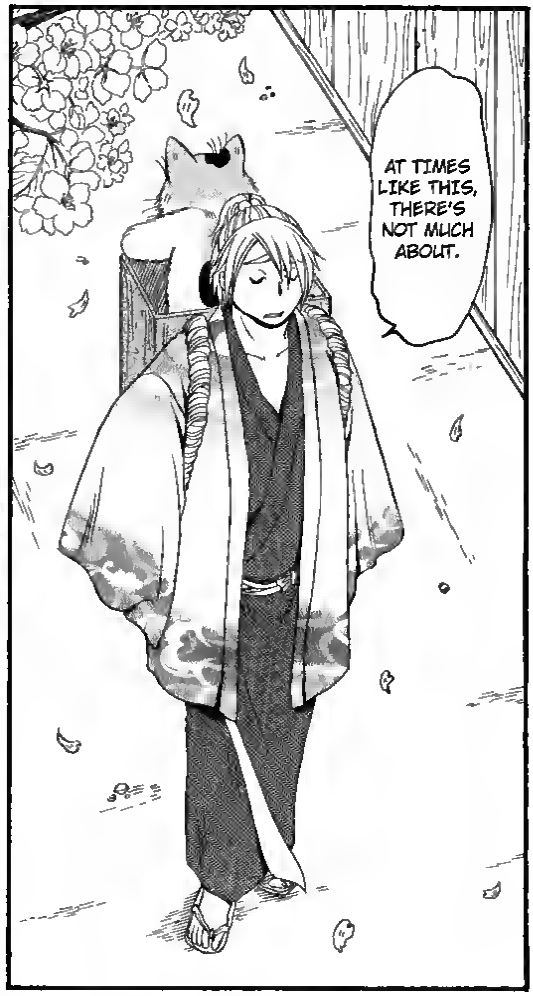


OPENS AND CLOSES MOUTH
あむ あむ
SNIFF
SNIFF
WHIMPER...
WHIMPER
SQUEAL
SQUEAL
SQUEAL
NUZZLE
もふっ
NUZZLE
もふっ
NUZZLE
もふっ
NUZZLE
もふっ
NUZZLE
もふっ


SIGN FOOD


MRS. OKURA, WHERE CAN I BUY STARCH SYRUP?
OH! WHY DON'T YOU TAKE SOME OF OURS?

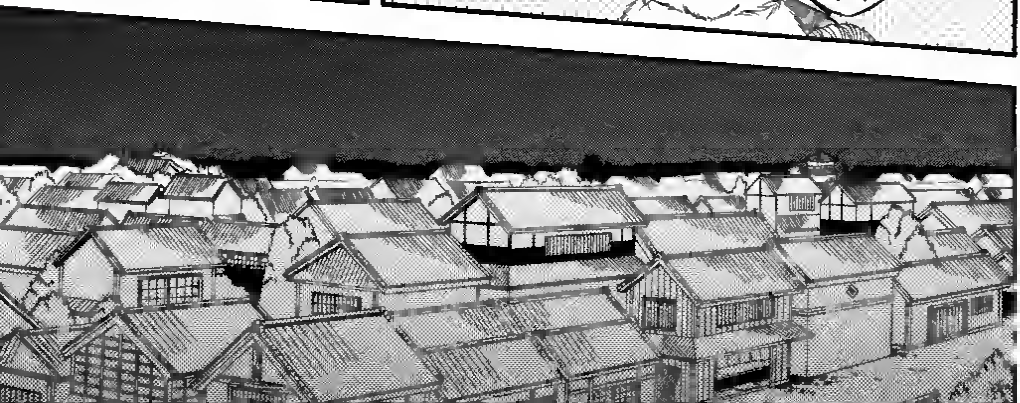
THE ONE AT JUUGEN'S PLACE WAS STILL PREGNANT ...
THEY'LL BE BORN VERY SOON, THOUGH ...

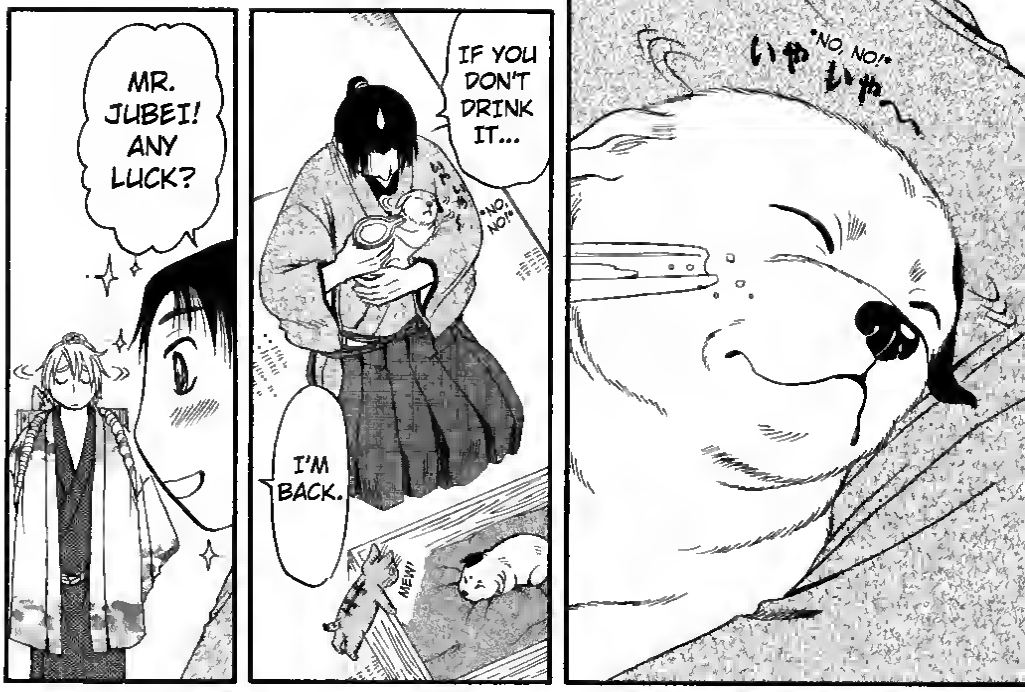

AT TIMES LIKE THIS, THERE'S NOT MUCH ABOUT.

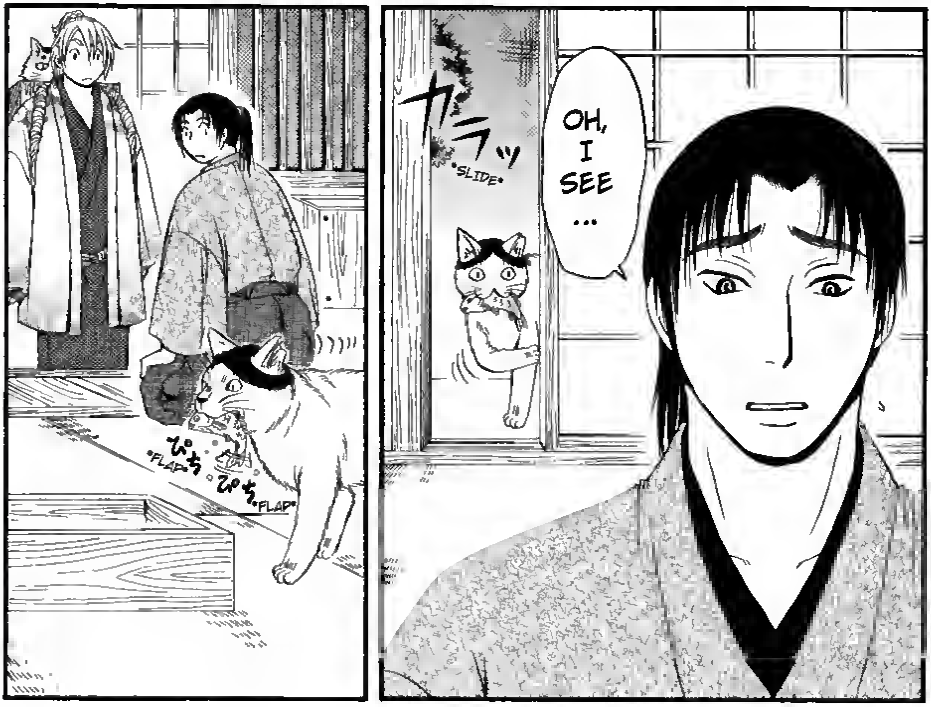
NITA ...
I CAN'T PRODUCE ANY MILK.
にゃほほ
NYO HO HO

DON'T ACT SO HIGH AND MIGHTY, YOU DUMB CAT!
WHAT DID YOU SAY, YOU STUPID HUMAN!?
HEY! EVEN I'M NOT OMNI-POTENT!
WHAAAT!?
IS IT BECAUSE OF YOUR "RULES"? YOU USELESS NEKOMATA*!
TSK!
WOOF!

*NEKOMATA = MYTHICAL TWO-TAILED CAT




MR. JUBEI! ANY LUCK?
IF YOU DON'T DRINK IT...
"NO, NO!"
I'M BACK.
MEW!
いや "NO, NO!" いや

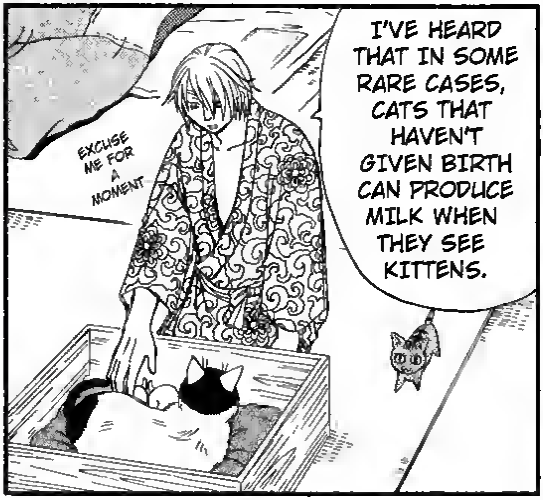

ガラッ "SLIDE"
OH, I SEE ...
ぴち "FLAP" ぴち "FLAP"

FLAP
ぴち
ぴち
FLAP
PEH!
ぺっ
MIMIMARU ... I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL BUT IT'S TOO EARLY FOR THEM TO BE EATING FISH...
……
FLAP
ぴち
FLAP
ぴち
YES, I'LL TRY LOOKING TOO.
WELL THEN, I'LL TRY SEARCHING FURTHER AFIELD TOMORROW.
FLAP
ぴち
ぴち
FLAP

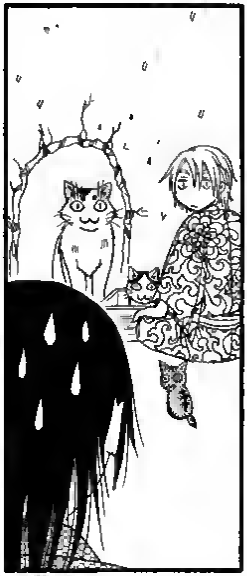
WHIMPER
LICK
ざり
WHINE
SQUEAL
SQUEAL
LICK
ざり
LICK
ざり

CRASH!
MR ...
MR. JUBEI !!
MR ...
WHAT IS IT THIS TIME?
!!!
CRUMBLE
CRUMBLE

M... MIMI-MARU IS ...!
SUCKLE
SUCKLE
IS ANY COMING OUT?
IT LOOKS LIKE MIMIMARU'S GIVING THEM MILK.


EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT
I'VE HEARD THAT IN SOME RARE CASES, CATS THAT HAVEN'T GIVEN BIRTH CAN PRODUCE MILK WHEN THEY SEE KITTENS.

*CHIBI = JUBEI'S NICKNAME FOR TIGER, MEANING "SMALL"



NOTE: "MIMI" MEANS "EAR" AND "MARU" IS USUALLY ONLY USED IN BOY'S NAMES.

I SEE.
IT'LL GET THICKER FROM NOW ON
IT'S STILL A LITTLE WATERY BUT SOME IS COMING OUT.
YES,
MR. JUBEI,
IT'S SO MYSTERIOUS, ISN'T IT?

EVEN IF IT'S JUST TEMPORARY, PARENTAL LOVE ...
...CAN MAKE THE BODY CHANGE LIKE THIS.
HER HEART ...
...IS SO WARM AND STRONG.

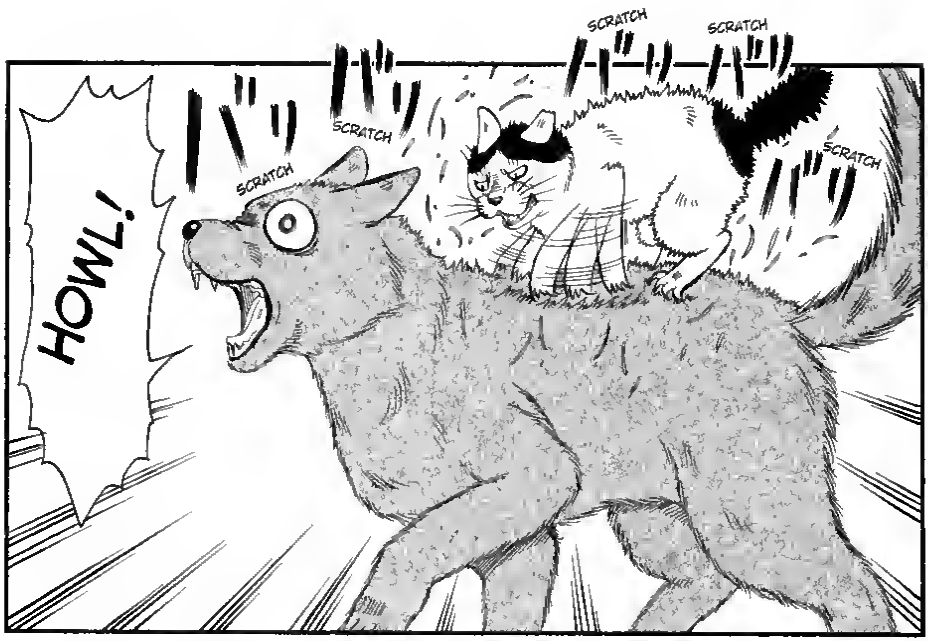
SQUEAL
OH! THEIR EYES HAVE OPENED!
SLIDE
RUFF!
わふ
RUFF!
わふ

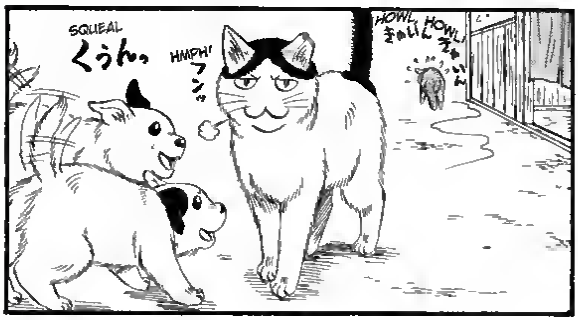
RUFF!♡
MEOW!
RUNNING FOOTSTEPS
とたたたたた
わふっ
RUFF!
わふ
RUFF!
わふ
RUFF!

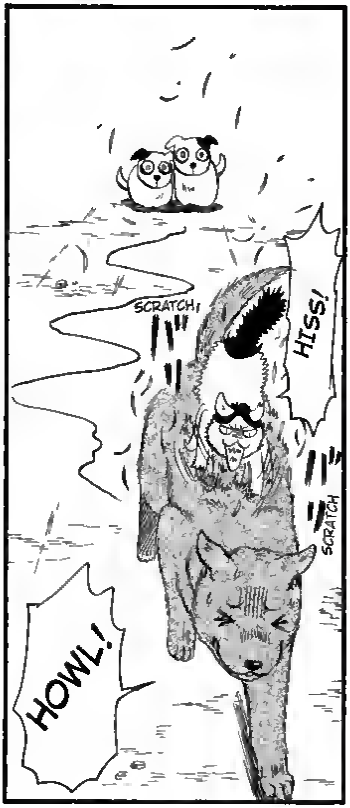
RUFF!
BAM!
MRRAAOOOW!!

WHIMPER
WOOF!
WOOF!
SQUEAL!

GRRRRR...

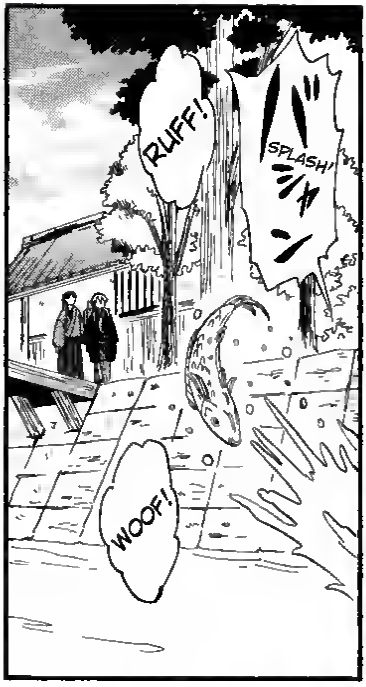

SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
HOWL!

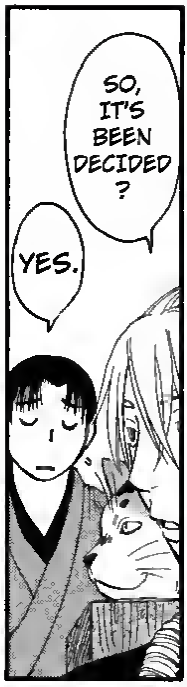

SQUEAL
くぅん。
HMPH!
フン
HOWL
わぉん
HOWL
わぉん


SCRATCH!
HISS!
SCRATCH
HOWL!

THEIR MOTHER'S TOUGH, ISN'T SHE?
•SLIDE•
ガラ

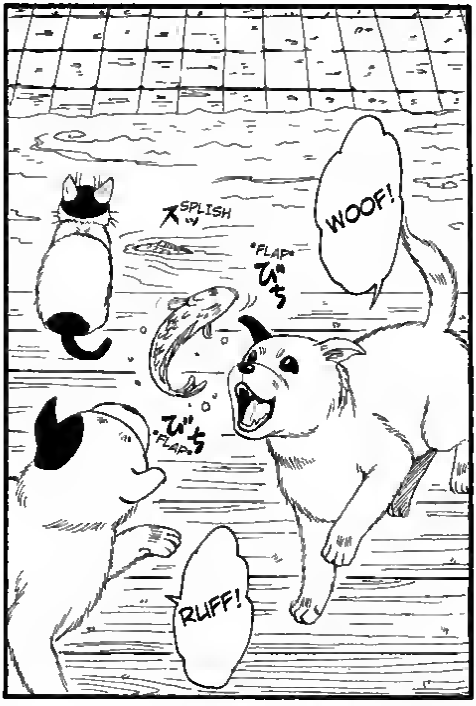
RUFF
わふ
RUFF
わふ


RUFF!
SPLASH!
WOOF!

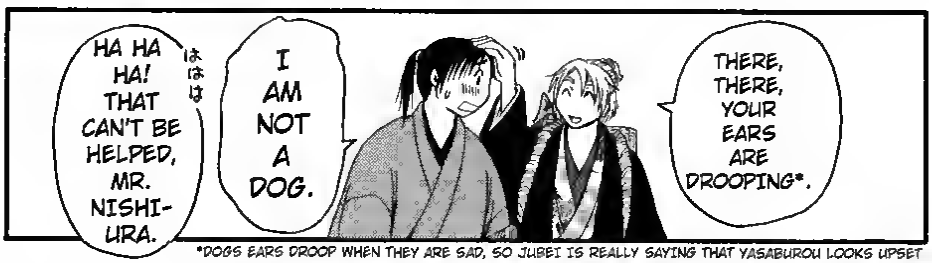

SO, IT'S BEEN DECIDED?
YES.

WELL THEN, SEE YOU AGAIN.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
YES, WE WERE JUST LOOKING FOR ONE, MR. NISHIURA.
SEE YOU AGAIN, TEACHER!

YELP!
びだ
WHACK
SPLASH!

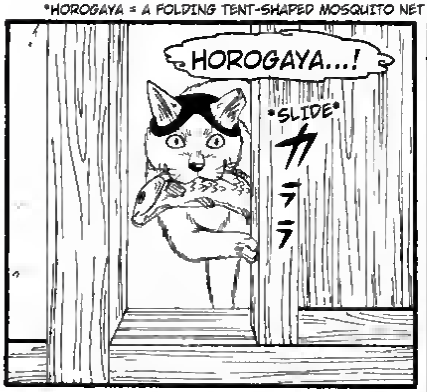

SPLISH
WOOF!
FLAP
びち
びち
FLAP
RUFF!

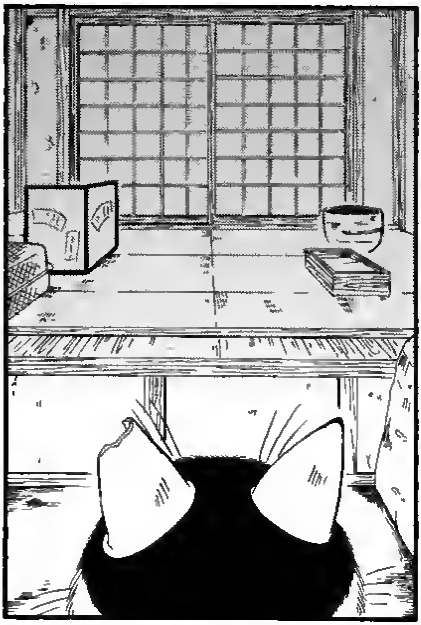
RUFF
WOOF

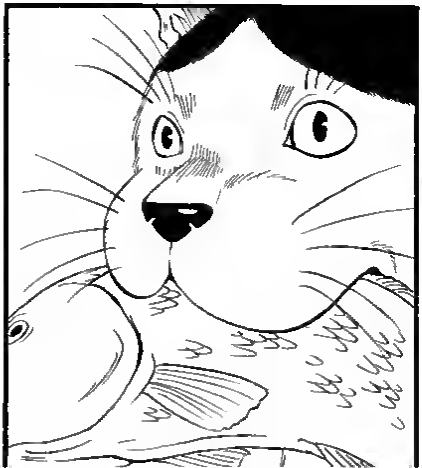


*DOGS EARS DROOP WHEN THEY ARE SAD, SO JUBEI IS REALLY SAYING THAT YASABUROU LOOKS UPSET

*HOROGAYA = A FOLDING TENT-SHAPED MOSQUITO NET FOR INFANTS.



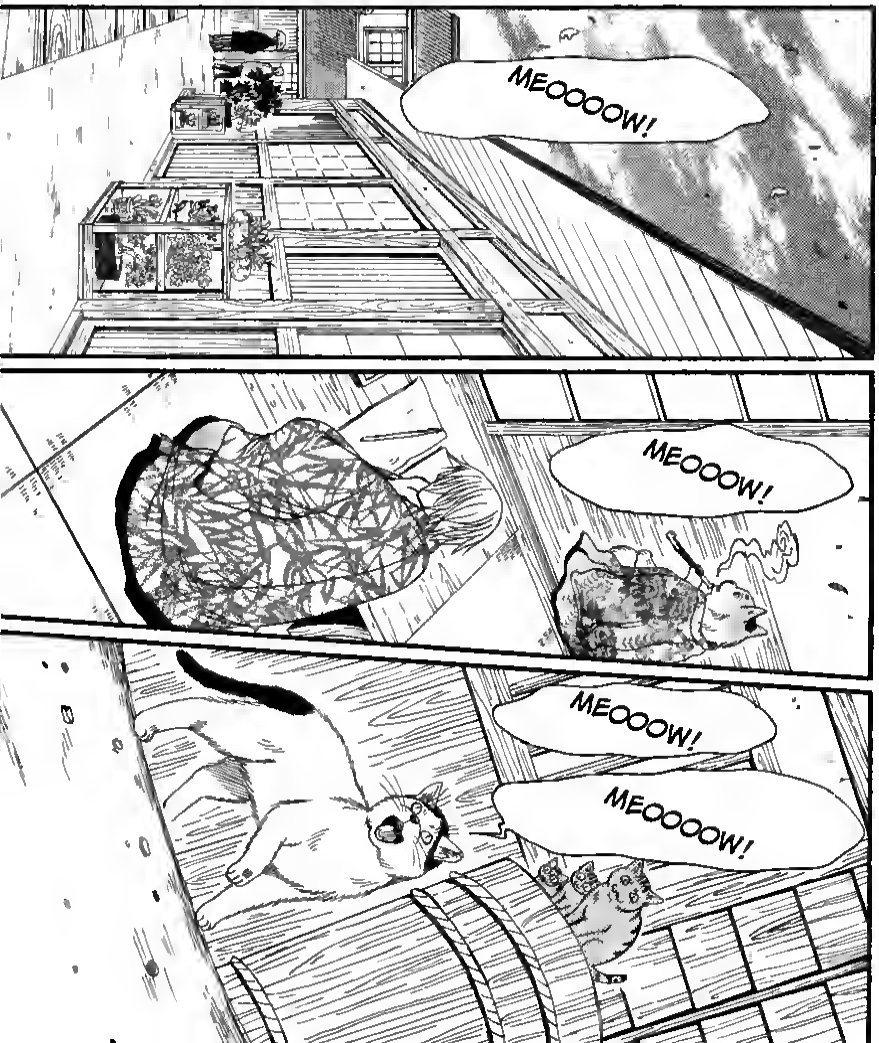


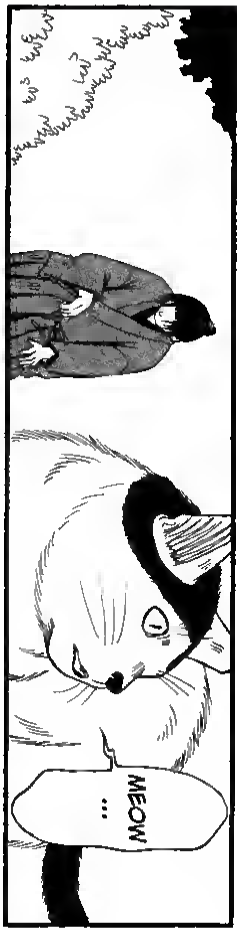


DROP
MEOOOW!
MEOOOOW!
MEOOOW!

MEOOOW!
MEOOW!
MEOOW!
MEOOW!
MIMI-MARU,
ARE YOU CALLING FOR YOUR CHILDREN?

YOUR CHILDREN HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO A NEW FAMILY.
THEY HAVE A WARM NATURE.
THEY'LL LOVE THEM FOREVER.


MEOOOOW!
MEOOOW!
MEOOOW!
MEOOOOW!


...
MEOW

MEOOOW!

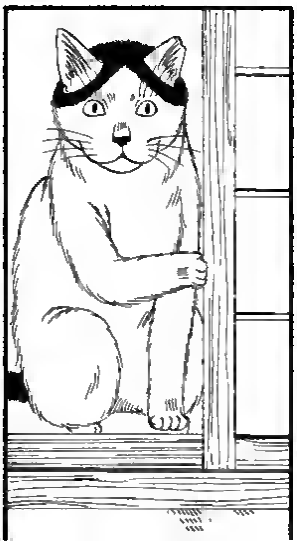
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

MEOOOOOW!
MEOW!
MEOOW!
MEOOOW!

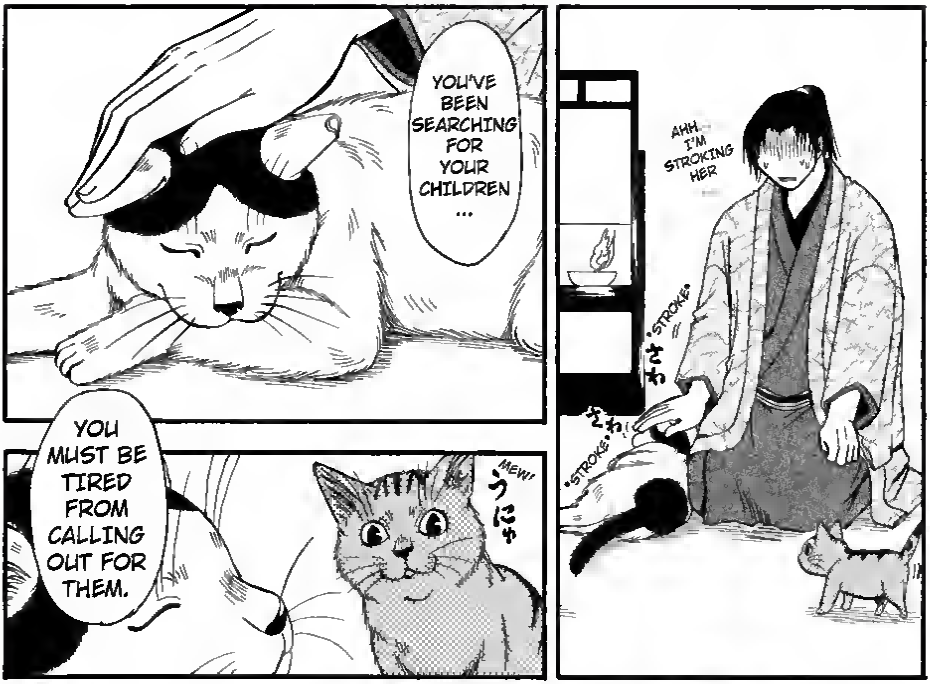
MEOOOW...

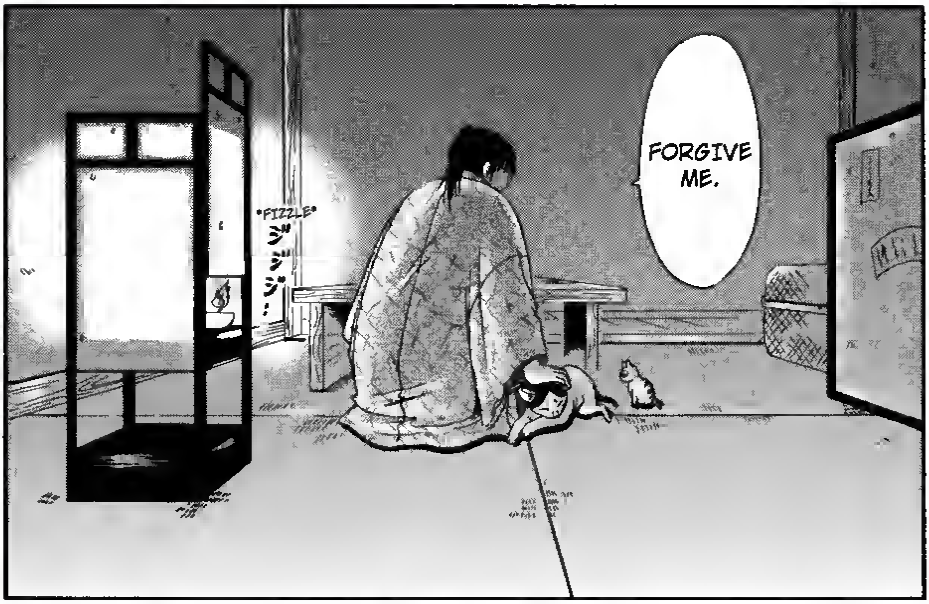
SLIDE

YOU MUST BE HUNGRY.
MIMI-MARU ...



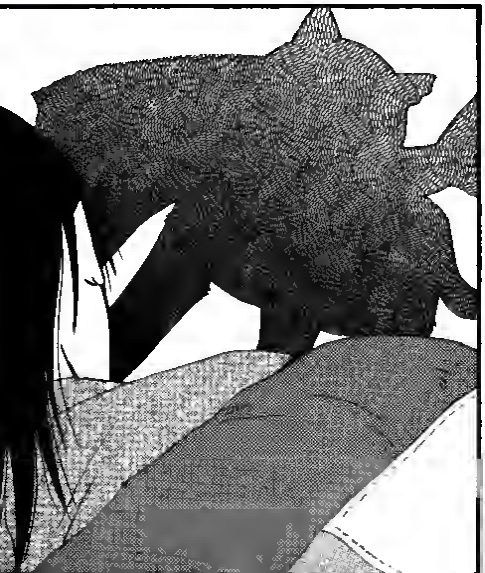
EEK!
YOU SHOULD EAT S...
SLUMP!
とさっ
"TOUCH"
さわっ
SHUDDER!
ぶるっ
FLAP FLAP
パタパタ


YOU'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR YOUR CHILDREN ...
AHH. I'M STROKING HER
さわ "STROKE"
さわ "STROKE"
YOU MUST BE TIRED FROM CALLING OUT FOR THEM.
MEW!
うにゃ

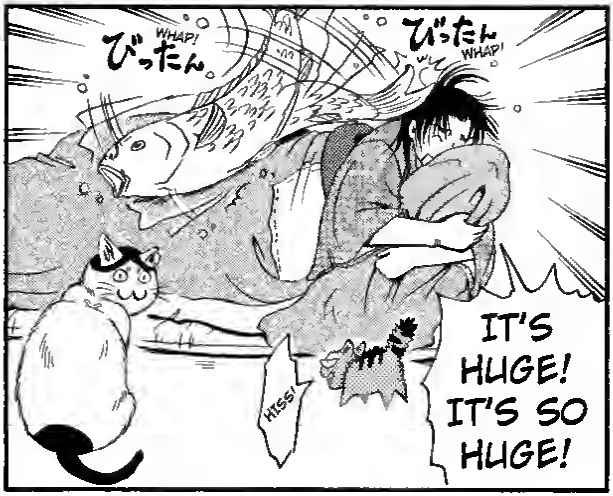

FORGIVE ME.
"FIZZLE"
ジジジ…

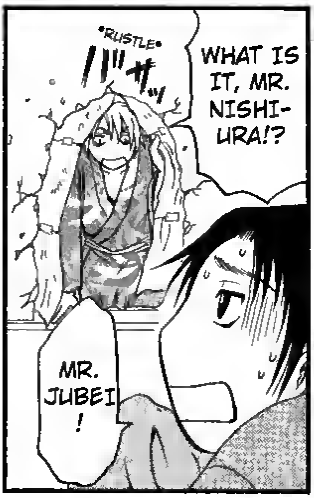
MOSQUITO NETS!
SAPLING MOSQUITO NETS!

SAPLING MOSQUITO NETS!
"DRAG"
ズル
"DRAG"
ズル



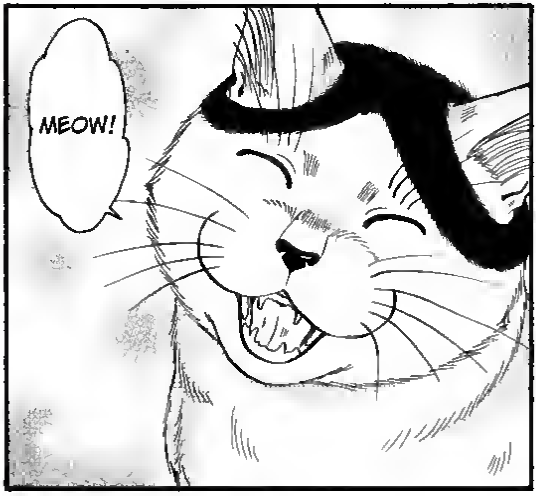
PFFF!
ブ
ッ
ッ
WAAAAARGH!!!

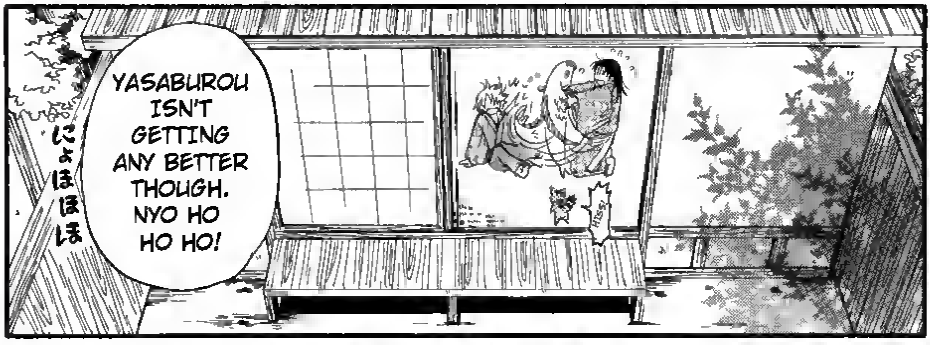

WHAP!
びったん
びったん
WHAP!
HISS!
IT'S HUGE! IT'S SO HUGE!


RUSTLE
WHAT IS IT, MR. NISHI-URA!?
MR. JUBEI!

んー HMMM
HA HA! THAT'S A BIG CATCH!
TONIGHT, LET'S HAVE CARP MISO SOUP WITH EVERYONE IN THE STREET!
ALRIGHT, LEAVE IT TO ME!
EEEEK!!!
MEW!!

DO YOU KNOW, MIMI -MARU?
WHAP WHAP WHAP!
びだだだ
MR. JUBEI!
OW OW OW!
HISS!
ABOUT WHAT YOUR CHILDREN ...
... INHERITED FROM YOU...
"DASH"
チャカ
"DASH"
チャカ
MIGI = RIGHT HIDARI = LEFT MOST LIKELY A REFERENCE TO THE FACT THAT EACH DOG HAS ONE BLACK EAR, MIGI'S ON THE RIGHT AND HIDARI'S ON THE LEFT
ばしゃーん
SPLASH!
WOAH!
HIDARI -MARU!
WAIT, MIGI -MARU!
RUFF!
WOOF!



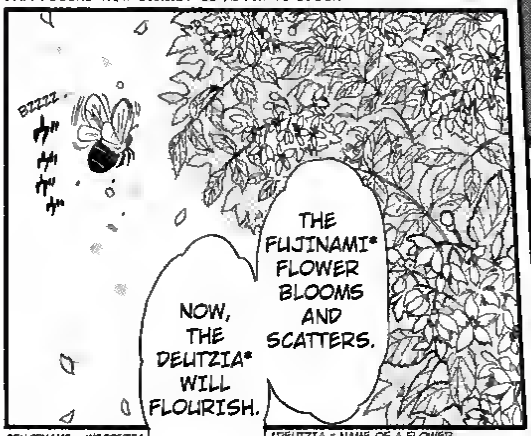


第十五話 完

END OF CHAPTER 15

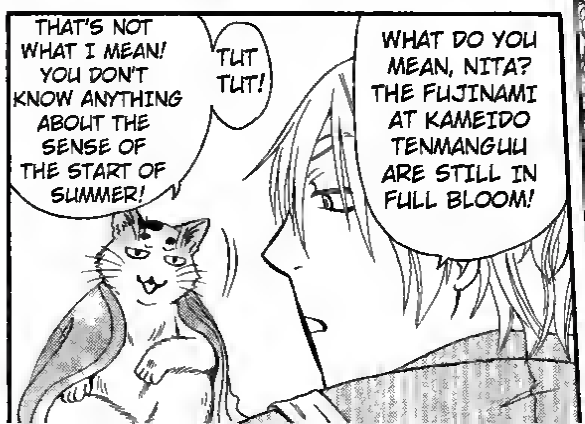
猫絵十兵衛
御伽草紙
ねこえじゅうべえおとぎそうし
TALES OF A CAT PAINTER
藤波を観る猫の巻
ふじなみみ
FUJINAMI WATCHING CAT

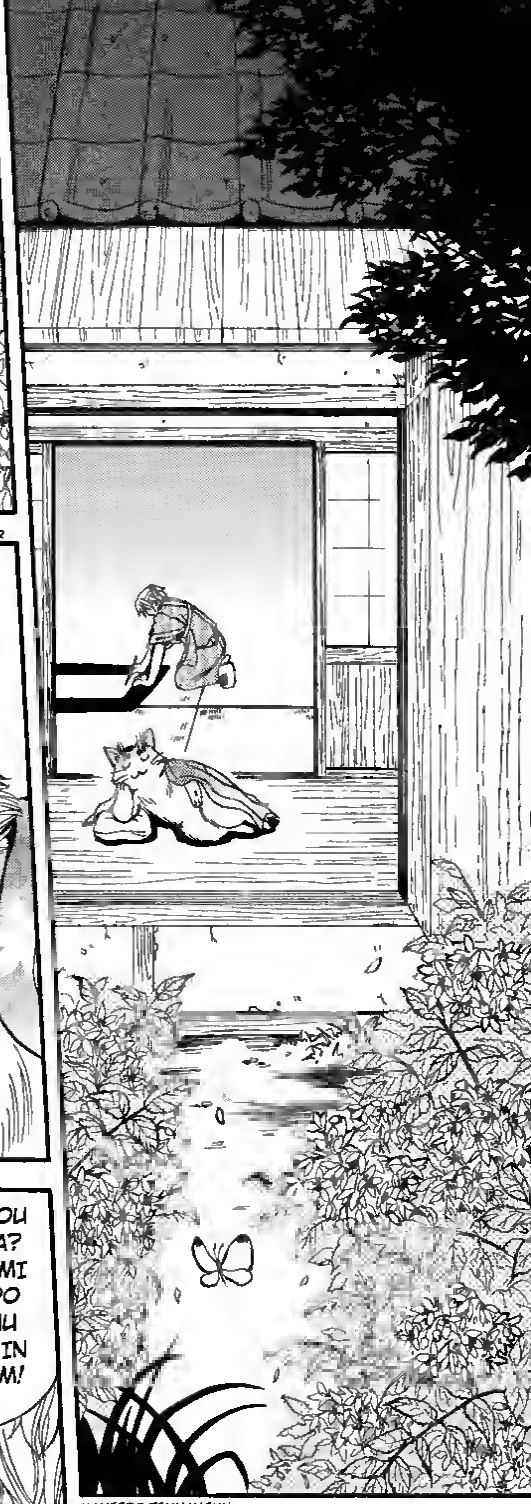
NOTE QUOTES FROM AN ANCIENT JAPANESE POEM, EXPRESSING THAT SUMMER IS ABOUT TO BEGIN



*FUJINAMI = WISTERIA

*DEUTZIA = NAME OF A FLOWER ALSO KNOWN AS JAPANESE SNOWFLOWER


THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN! YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE SENSE OF THE START OF SUMMER!
TUT TUT!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, NITA? THE FUJINAMI AT KAMEIDO TENMANGUU ARE STILL IN FULL BLOOM!

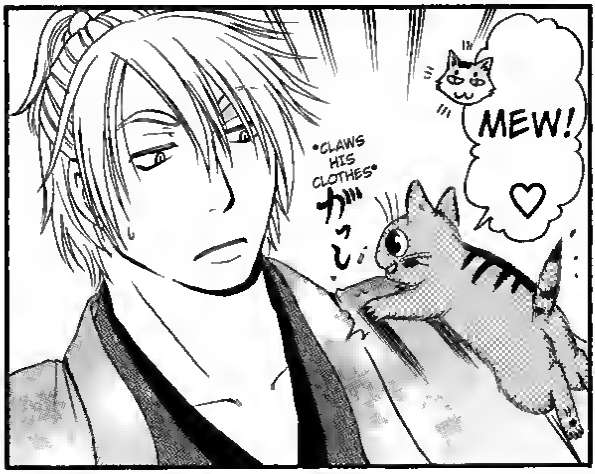


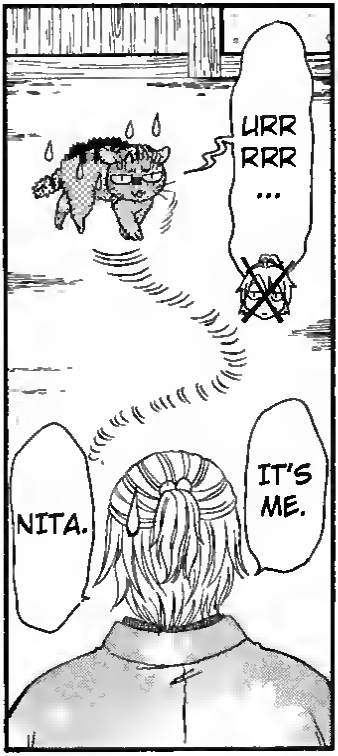
KAMEIDO TENMANGUU - NOW KNOWN AS KAMEIDO SHRINE

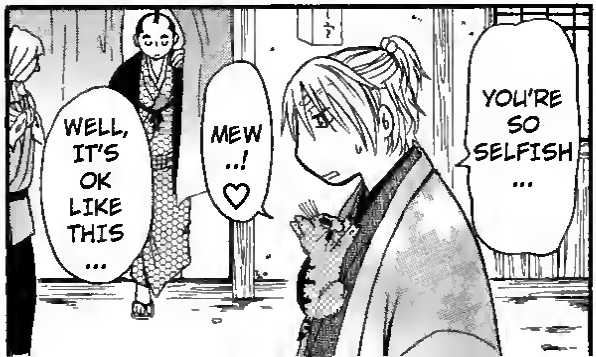
NEKOMATA = A MYTHICAL TWO-TAILED CAT

MEW ...!
I'LL GO FOR A LOOK AROUND KAMEIDO.
I'M NOT JUBEI BUT ...
TIGER?
うぅ "PANIC"
うぅ "PANIC"
HE'S SUCH A TROUBLE-MAKER...
WHOOSH!
MEEEEW!

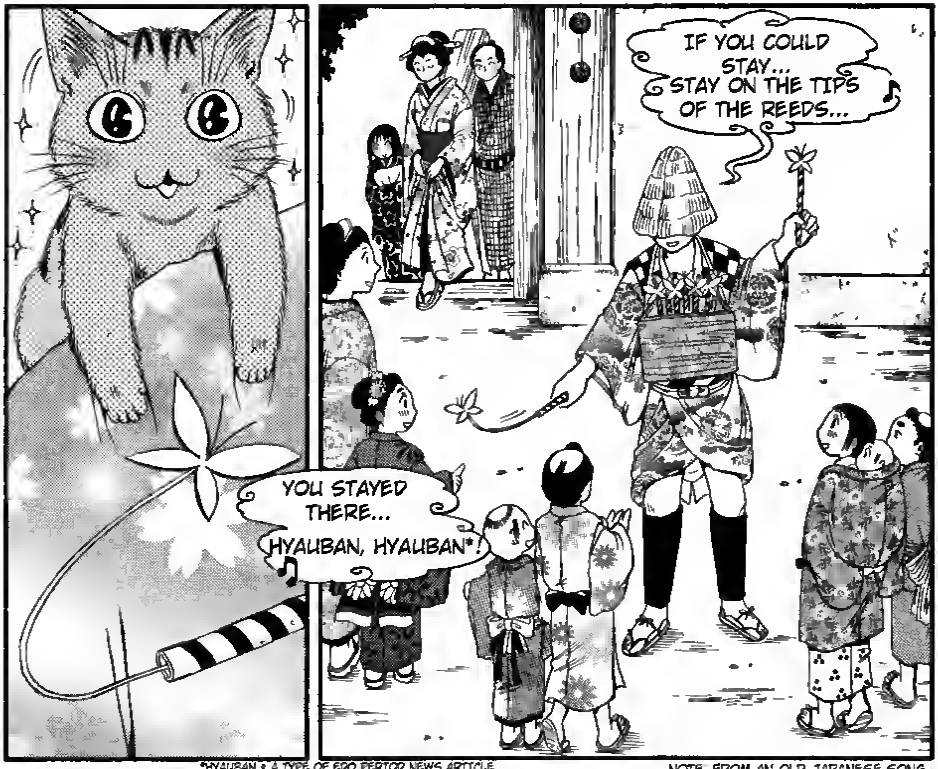
LIKE THIS! LIKE THIS!
PUFF!
ポォン
OH! IT'S NOT THIS GUY!
TIGER ...? ARE YOU LOST AGAIN?
CLACK!
カコッ
MEW! ♡


MEW!
CLAWS HIS CLOTHES
ガッ


URR RRR ...
IT'S ME.
NITA.

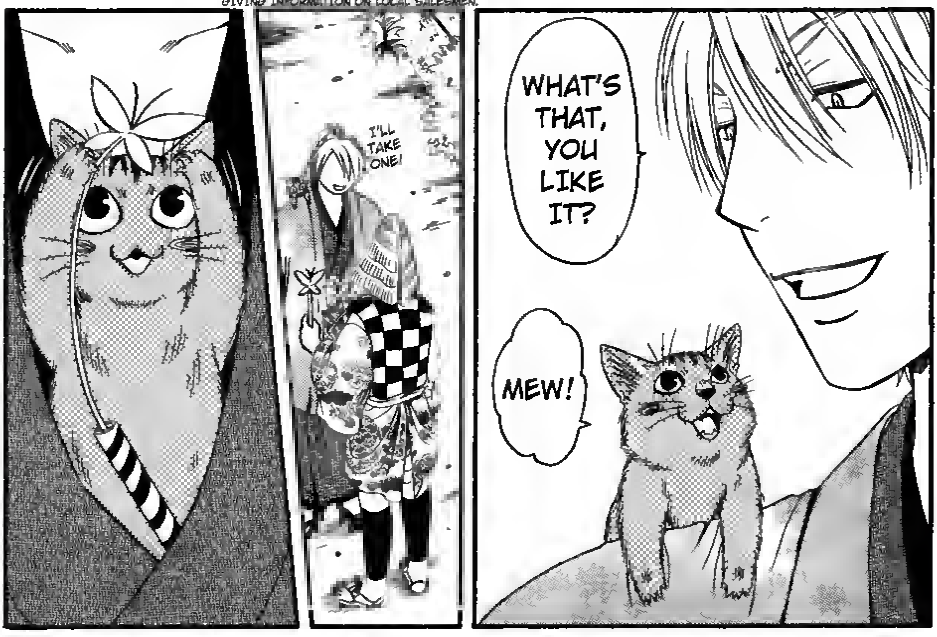

YOU'RE SO SELFISH ...
MEW ..!
WELL, IT'S OK LIKE THIS ...

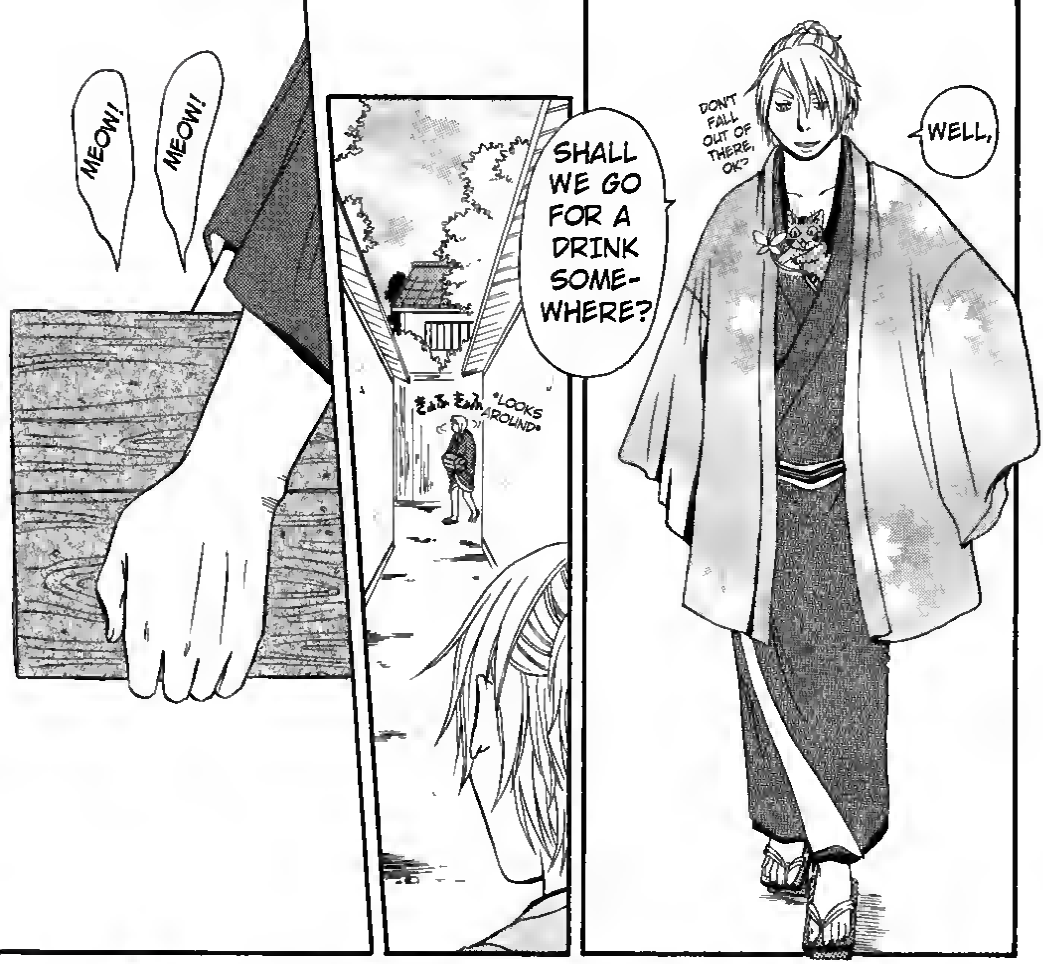
...I'VE FOUND A COMPANION.
MEW!
AS EXPECTED, THE GOSHAKU FUJINAMI* FLOWERS OF KAMEIDO ARE SPECTACULAR.
RUSTLE..
*GOSHAKU FUJINAMI = A SUB-SPECIES OF WISTERIA
BUTTERFLY, STAY...!
STAY ON THE BLOSSOM!
RUSTLE.
MEW!
IT SMELLS NICE ...
RUSTLE..

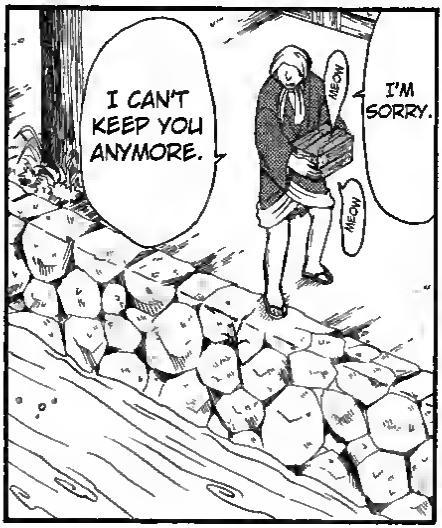


*HYAUBAN = A TYPE OF EDO PERIOD NEWS ARTICLE, GIVING INFORMATION ON LOCAL SALESMEN.

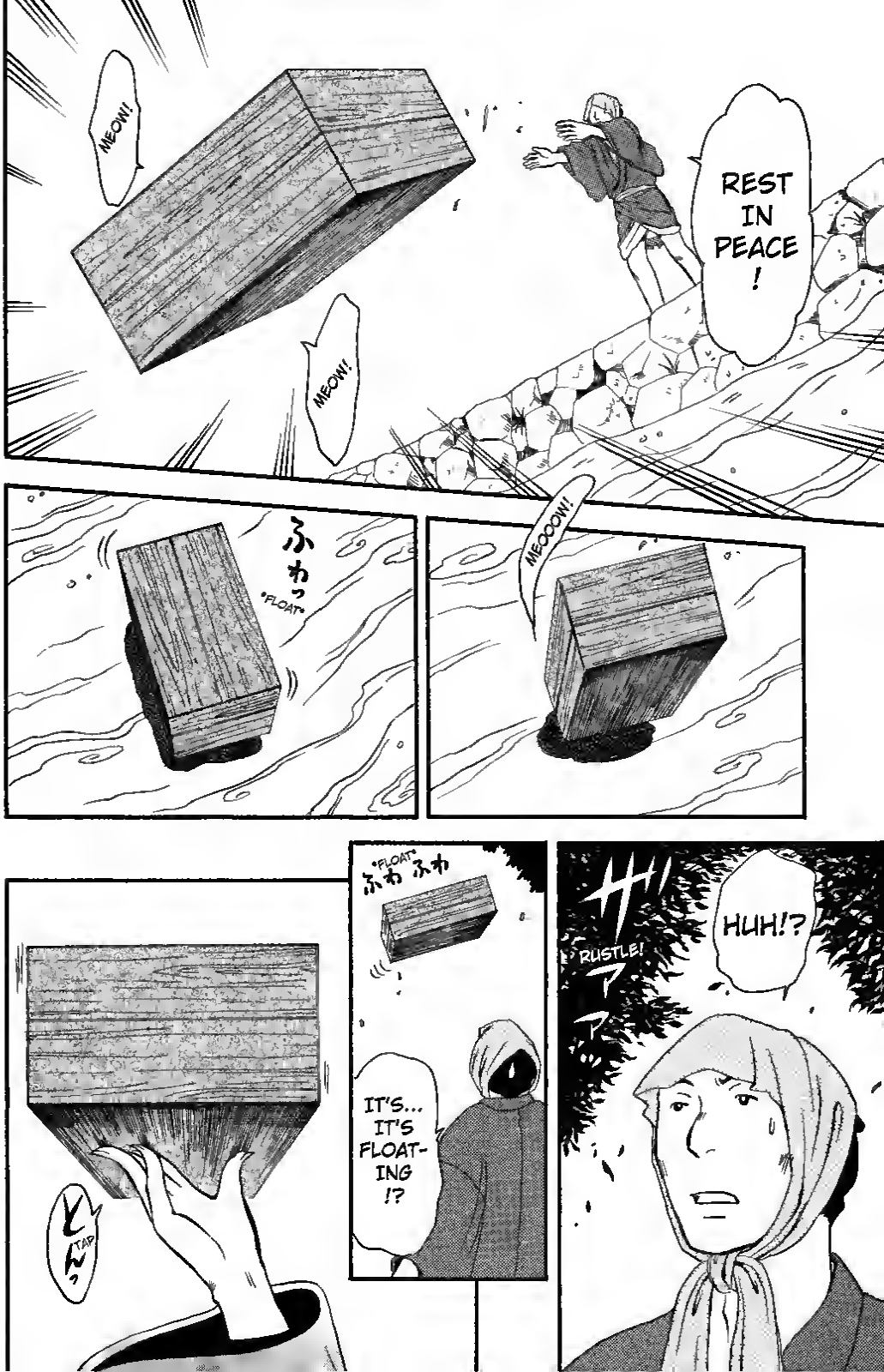
NOTE FROM AN OLD JAPANESE SONG.




MEOW!
MEOW!
SHALL WE GO FOR A DRINK SOME-WHERE?
LOOKS AROUND
DON'T FALL OUT OF THERE, OK?
WELL,


I CAN'T KEEP YOU ANYMORE.
MEOW
I'M SORRY.
MEOW

RUSTLE


MEOW!
REST IN PEACE!
MEOW!
ふわっ
"FLOAT"
MEOOOW!
"FLOAT"
ふわ ふわ
IT'S... IT'S FLOATING!?
とんっ
TAP
RUSTLE!
HUH!?

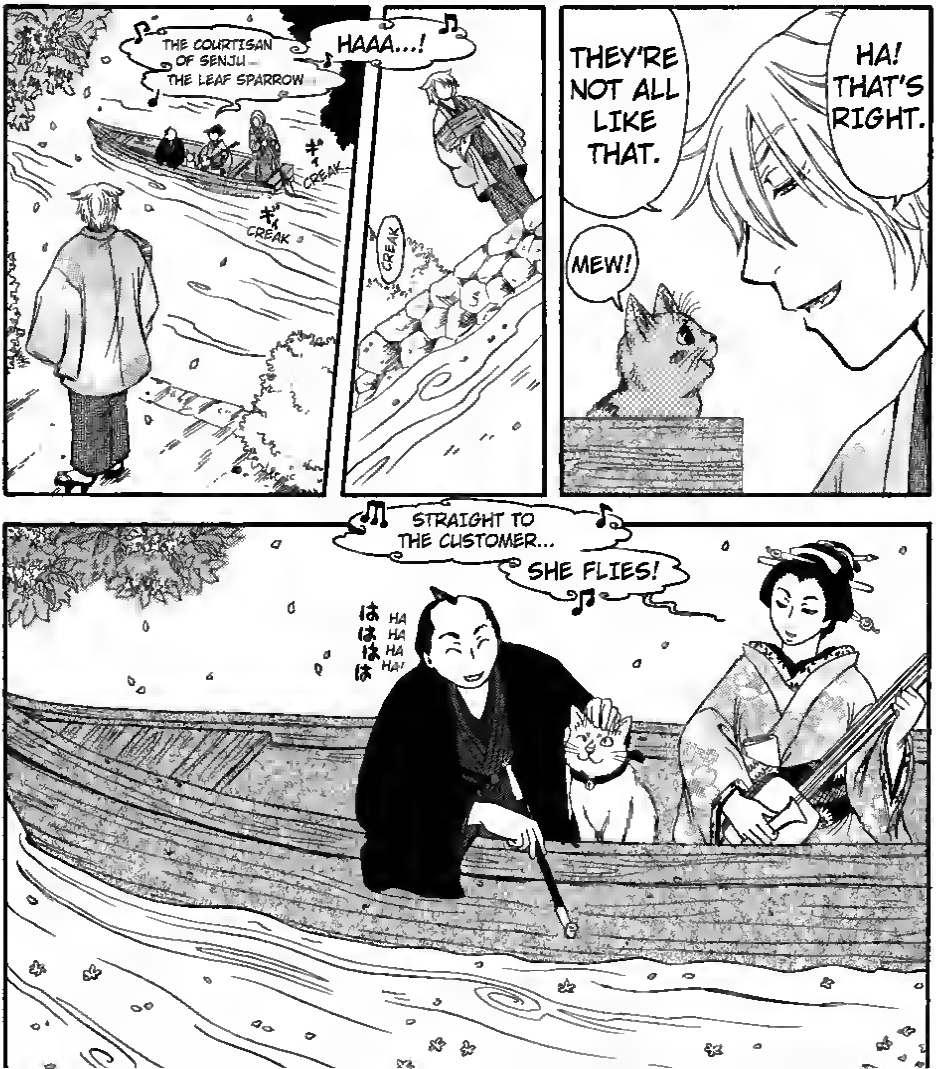
DON'T BE SO NAIVE ...
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WILL BE RESTING IN PEACE.
MEW.
WH... WHO ARE YOU?
EEK!
NO, IT'S PRESUM-PTUOUS TO THINK THAT YOU WOULD BE REBORN AS A BUDDHA.
CLICK
CLICK
YOU WOULD BE BETTER SUITED TO...
HAAAAA...

...BEING REBORN INTO THE ANIMAL REALM!
ROOOOAAAR!!
ROAAAR!
AAA AAR GHH !!
H... HELP ME!
MRAOOW!!
RAAOW!!
HUH! I AIN'T GONNA HELP YOU.
MEW?

HE DOESN'T REALIZE THE VALUE OF LIFE.
MEOW!
MEW!
♡
PUFF!
PUFF!
PUFF!
HEY ..!
THAT'S ENOUGH ...
YOU GUYS SEEM WELL!
NYO HO!
ROAR!
RAOW!
MRAAOW!!

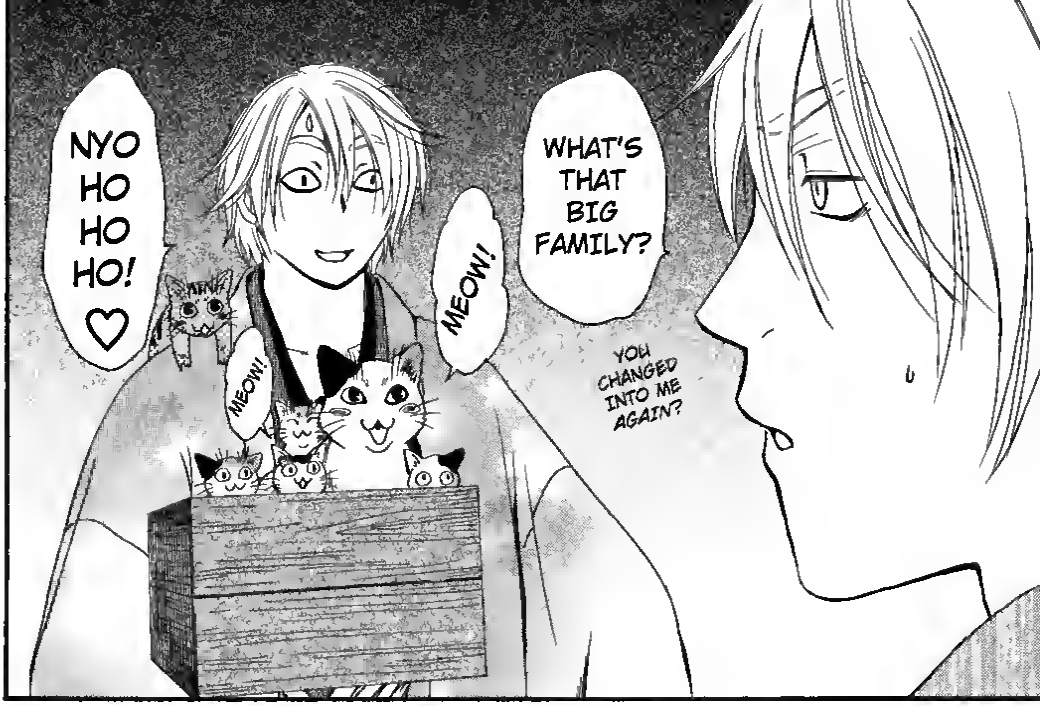
WHAT A LOSER!
HA! HE'S LOST CONSCI-OUSNESS.
DAZED
IN THE PRESENT DAY, AS IN THE PAST...
HUMANS ARE BIZARRE CREATURES ...
MEW ?
THEY GIVE AND TAKE LIFE ACCORDING TO THEIR GREED AND WORDLY DESIRES.

MEW!


THE COURTISAN OF SENJU — THE LEAF SPARROW
HAAA...!
CREAK
CREAK
CREAK
THEY'RE NOT ALL LIKE THAT.
HA! THAT'S RIGHT.
MEW!
STRAIGHT TO THE CUSTOMER...
SHE FLIES!
HA HA HA HA!

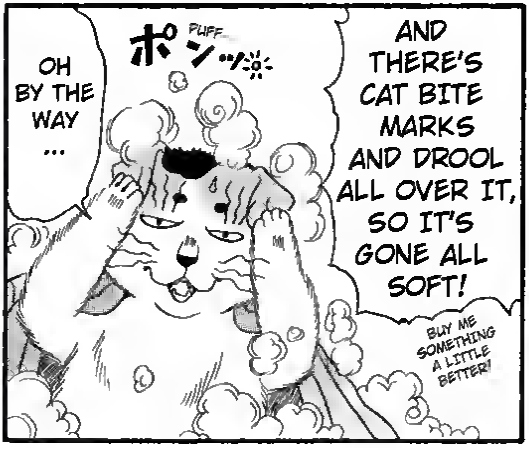
WELL....!
AFTER LEAVING SENJU... COMING HERE TO MAKINO.
MAYBE WORDLY DESIRES ARE WHAT MAKE THEM HUMAN ...?
MEW!
CREAK
CREAK
CAN'T EVEN HOLD... AN OAR OR A PADDLE!

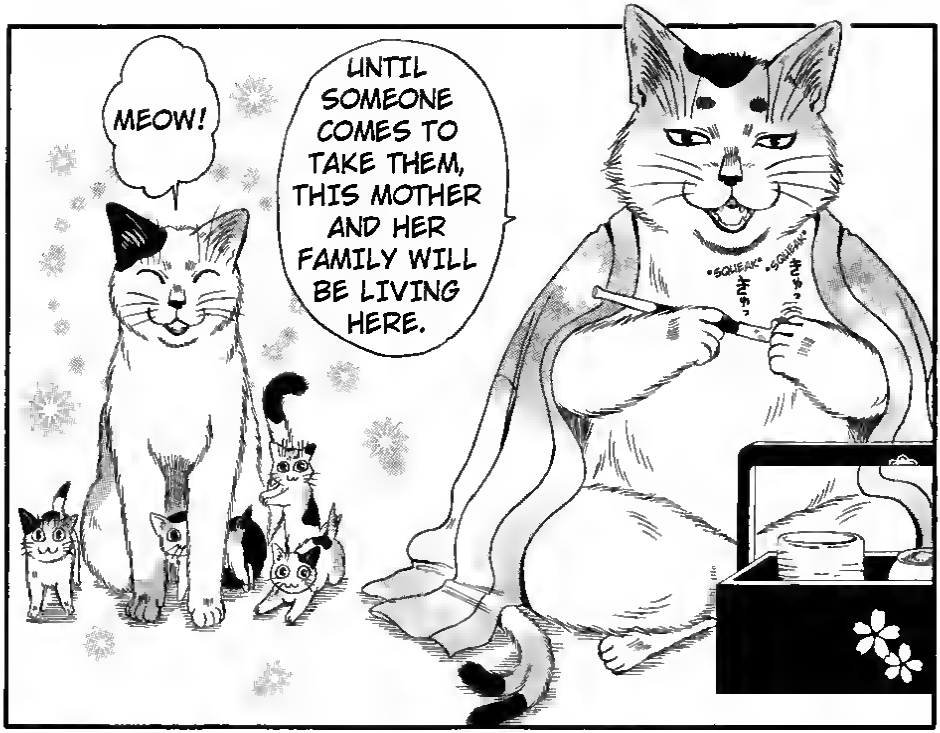
...LET'S GO AND SEARCH FOR YOUR MOTHER.
MEOW!
WELL THEN ...
CLACK
UGH THE CATS ARE
OH! WELCOME BA...
SLIDE
ガラ
I'M BACK!
SIGN: CAT PICTURES SLIDE!


NYO HO HO HO! ♡
MEOW!
MEOW!
WHAT'S THAT BIG FAMILY?
YOU CHANGED INTO ME AGAIN?

ISN'T THIS IS A KID'S TOY!?
A BUTTER -FLY?
IT'S A SOUV -ENIR.

WHEN DID YOU HAVE ALL THOSE KIDS, NITA?
WHACK!
ぼっ
OUCH!


OH BY THE WAY ...
PUFF
ポン
AND THERE'S CAT BITE MARKS AND DROOL ALL OVER IT, SO IT'S GONE ALL SOFT!
BUY ME SOMETHING A LITTLE BETTER!


MEOW!
UNTIL SOMEONE COMES TO TAKE THEM, THIS MOTHER AND HER FAMILY WILL BE LIVING HERE.
"SQUEAK"
"SQUEAK"

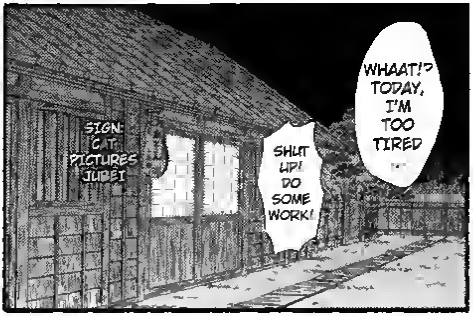
DAMN IT!
SNIFF
SNIFF

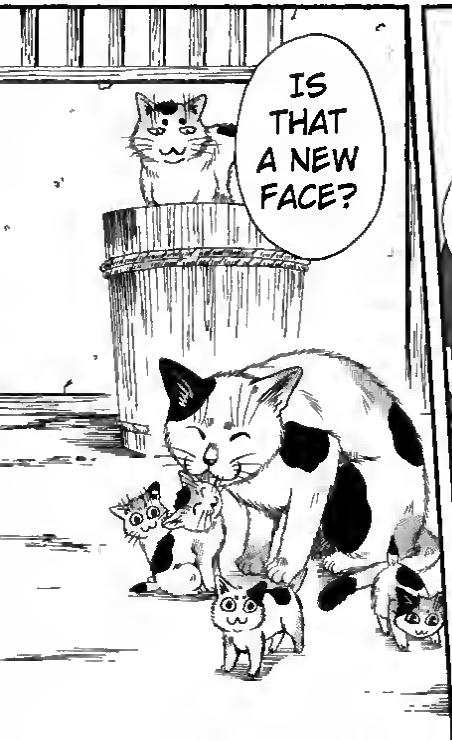
PLEASH CAN THEY STHAY HERE?
DON'T YOU HAVE ANYTHING ELSE TO SAY?
AND !?
"SQUEEZE"
"SQUEEZE"
"SQUEEZE"

I HAVEN'T BOUGHT ANY FISH
RIGHT NOW, I CAN ONLY MAKE A RICE DISH FOR CATS.
THAT'LL DO. THAT'LL DO.
OW OW! DON'T CLIMB ON ME!
FIZZLE
CLAW ガっし
CLAW ガっし
CLAW ガっし
THERE ARE SHARP OBJECTS, SO IT'S DANGER-OUS!
ARGH! HEY, DON'T BITE ME!
SHEESH ...

COME HERE AND SHRED THE FISH FLAKES!
にょほほほ～
MALE CATS DON'T RAISE THEIR YOUNG, SO YOU'RE MORE LIKE THEIR MOTHER!
NYO HO HO HO!
JUBEI, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO LOOKS MORE LIKE THEIR FATHER!

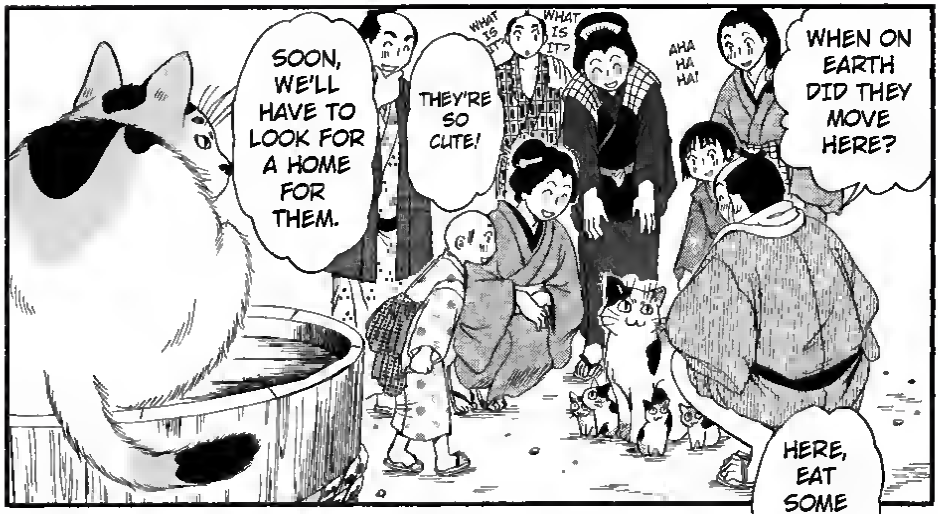
TWEET ちゅん
TWEET ちゅん
SIGN: C.T. PICTURES JUBEI

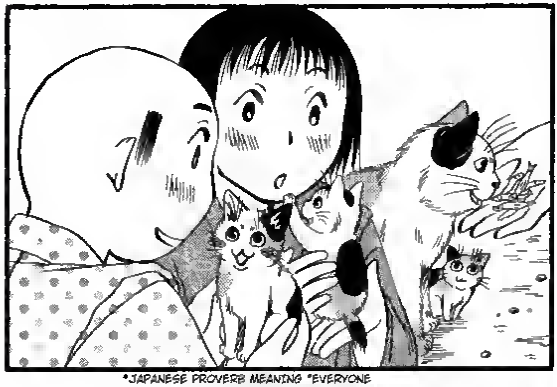

SIGN: C.T. PICTURES JUBEI
SHUT UP! DO SOME WORK!
WHAAT!? TODAY, I'M TOO TIRED...


IS THAT A NEW FACE?

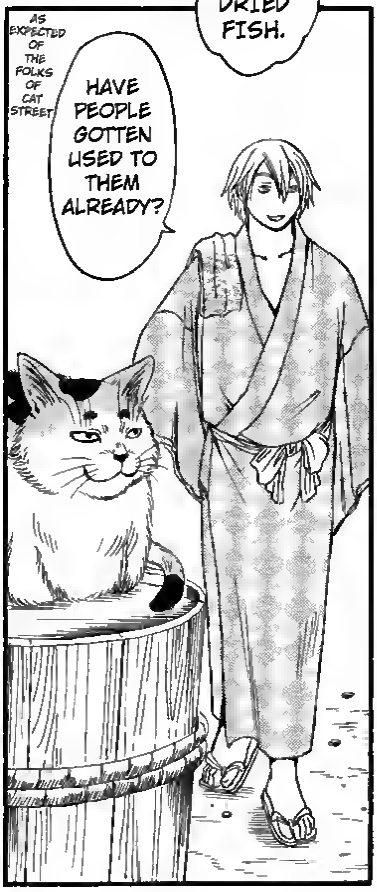
OH!
OH MY!
AH!

SPLASH
SPLASH


WHEN ON EARTH DID THEY MOVE HERE?
AHA HA HA!
WHAT IS IT?
WHAT IS IT?
THEY'RE SO CUTE!
SOON, WE'LL HAVE TO LOOK FOR A HOME FOR THEM.
HERE, EAT SOME DRIED FISH.



*JAPANESE PROVERB MEANING "EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN TASTES AND PERSONALITY".



IT ASTOUNDS ME THAT I'VE LIVED FOR THIS LONG AND NEVER ONCE HAVE I MET TWO PEOPLE WHO ARE THE SAME.
WELL, OF COURSE.
I'LL DRAW YOU A CAT
CAT PICTURES TO SCARE AWAY MICE!
OOF!
BAM!
OH, SORRY BUDDY ...

AAARGH !!
AH! IT'S THAT GUY!
HMM ?
BANNER: CAT PICTURES JUBE!
BANNER: CAT PICTURES TO WARD OFF MICE
I'M SORRY! I'M SO SORRY! I'LL NEVER DO SUCH A THING AGAIN, SO PLEASE, JUST DON'T KILL ME!
HUH ...? HEY ...
... NITA ...?
NYO HO?
WHAT DID YOU DO WHILE YOU WERE IN MY FORM?
NYO HO HO HO!

第十六話 完
END OF CHAPTER 16

*YAMANEKO MAWASHI = LITERALLY MEANS "MOUNTAIN CAT TURNING" BUT ALSO REFERS TO A KIND OF STREET PERFORMANCE USING PUPPETS

猫絵十兵衛

ねこえじゅうべえおとぎそうし
TALES OF A CAT PAINTER

御伽草紙

山猫いたちの巻♪

THE FUR OF THE MOUNTAIN CAT IS LONG, LONG...

THEY FEEL SAD WHEN THEY SLEEP ALONE...

♫

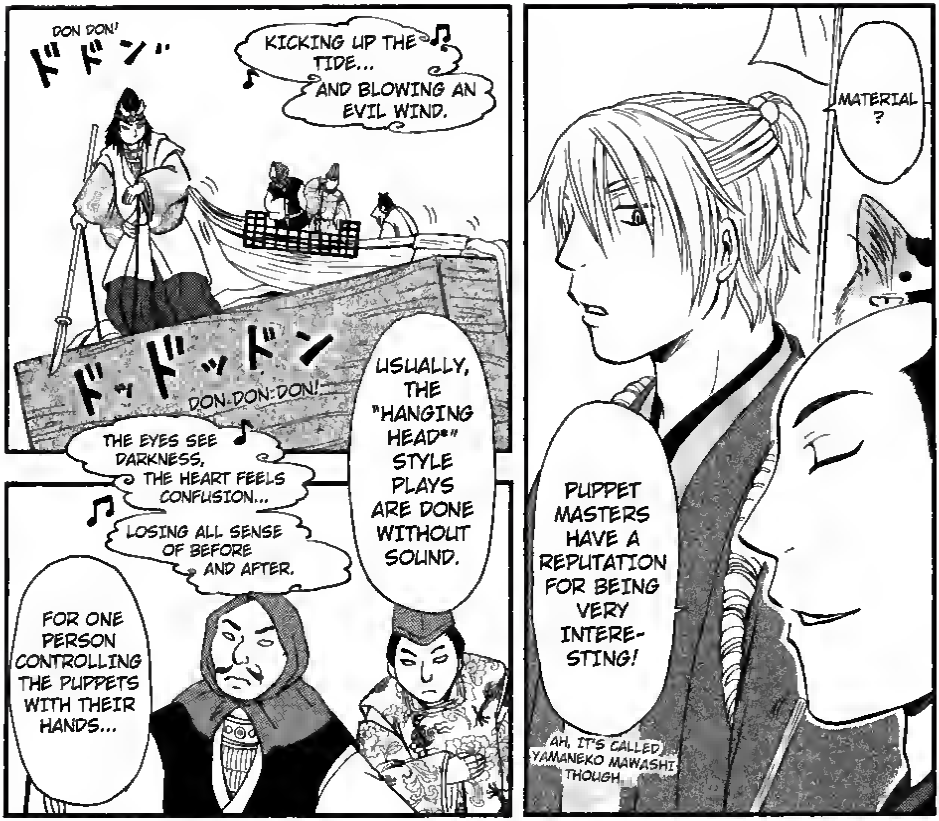
ドッドドン♫

DON! DON DON! *SOUND OF A SMALL DRUM*

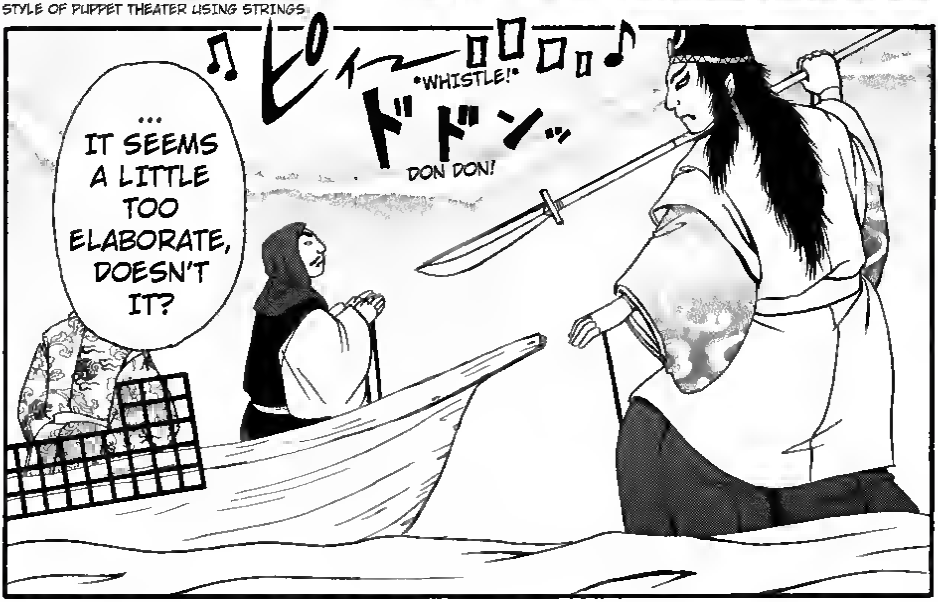
...HAS A NICE VOICE.

WHAT A CLEAR VOICE ...
...IT SOUNDS LIKE THE MUSIC OF THE HEAVENS.
HMM ... ISN'T THAT A BIT TOO MUCH PRAISE ?
"SMILE"
"SMILE"
IT'S YOU! HATSUKAZE KOINO, THE PHILAN-DERER!
OH NO, MR. JUBEI! PLEASE DON'T GIVE ME SUCH A STRANGE NICKNAME!
HMM ...

*THE TAIRA CLAN, ALSO KNOWN AS "HEIKE" WERE DEFEATED BY THE MINAMOTO (GENPEI) CLAN IN 1185 A.D.
WHISTLE
WHAT'S A WOMANIZING WRITER OF CHEAP FICTION LIKE YOU DOING HERE?
IF YOU LOOK TO THE SEA, YOU'LL SEE SOMETHING MYSTERIOUS...
DON DON
I'M LOOKING FOR MATERIAL FOR MY STORIES.
..YOU'LL SEE THE PERISHED TAIRA* CLAN, OF THE WESTERN LANDS
I'M NOT A PHILANDERER, I JUST ADORE WOMEN!
YEAH, YEAH.
DON DON DON!
THE NINTH DESCENDANT OF EMPEROR KAMMU**, THE GHOST OF TOMOMORI TAIRA***.
IT BEGINS WITH...
DORORORORO
*DRUM SOUNDS
AAH!
WOW!
**EMPEROR KAMMU - 737-806 A.D.
***TOMOMORI TAIRA - 1152-1185 A.D. DIED IN THE GENPEI WAR.


DON DON!
ドドン
KICKING UP THE TIDE...
AND BLOWING AN EVIL WIND.
ドドッドン
DON-DON-DON!
USUALLY, THE "HANGING HEAD*" STYLE PLAYS ARE DONE WITHOUT SOUND.
THE EYES SEE DARKNESS, THE HEART FEELS CONFUSION...
LOSING ALL SENSE OF BEFORE AND AFTER.
FOR ONE PERSON CONTROLLING THE PUPPETS WITH THEIR HANDS...
MATERIAL ?
PUPPET MASTERS HAVE A REPUTATION FOR BEING VERY INTERE-STING!
AH, IT'S CALLED YAMANEKO MAWASHI THOUGH.

*A STYLE OF PUPPET THEATER USING STRINGS.



DON'T YOU SENSE THE PRESENCE OF SOME KIND OF DUBIOUS SECRET?
MY INTUITION TELLS ME SOMETHING
フフフ…
HA HA HA!
LISTEN, WHY DON'T YOU JUST SAVE THAT FOR YOUR BOOKS?
HMMM... WOULDN'T IT BE MORE INTERESTING IF THE PUPPETEER WAS ACTUALLY SOME KIND OF MAGICIAN, OR IF THE PUPPETS WERE ALIVE?
おおっ
AAAH!
WHISTLE
WHISTLE
...AND BECOME ONE WITH THE WHITE WAVES
IF YOU LOOKED INTO IT FURTHER, YOU'D SEE IT JUST USES A SIMPLE MECHANISM, RIGHT?
IS THAT SO?

ぴょこっ
"SUDDENLY APPEARS"
WOW!
DON'T DO BAD THINGS!
カッドンドン
KA! DON DON!
"DRUM SOUNDS"
NOW, NOW!
CHILDREN, CHILDREN!
"WRIGGLE"
ムク
ムク
"WRIGGLE"
"MAGIC WORDS LIKE "ABRA CADABRA"
SUPPERA PONNO*!
SWING!
クィッ
アハハハ
AH HA HA HA
GET BITTEN BY THE BEAST!
WOW!
きゃあ
WOW!
PEOPLE WHO DO BAD THINGS... GET BITTEN BY THE MOUNTAIN CAT!
わあ
AAH!
SWING!
クィッ
SWING!
クィッ

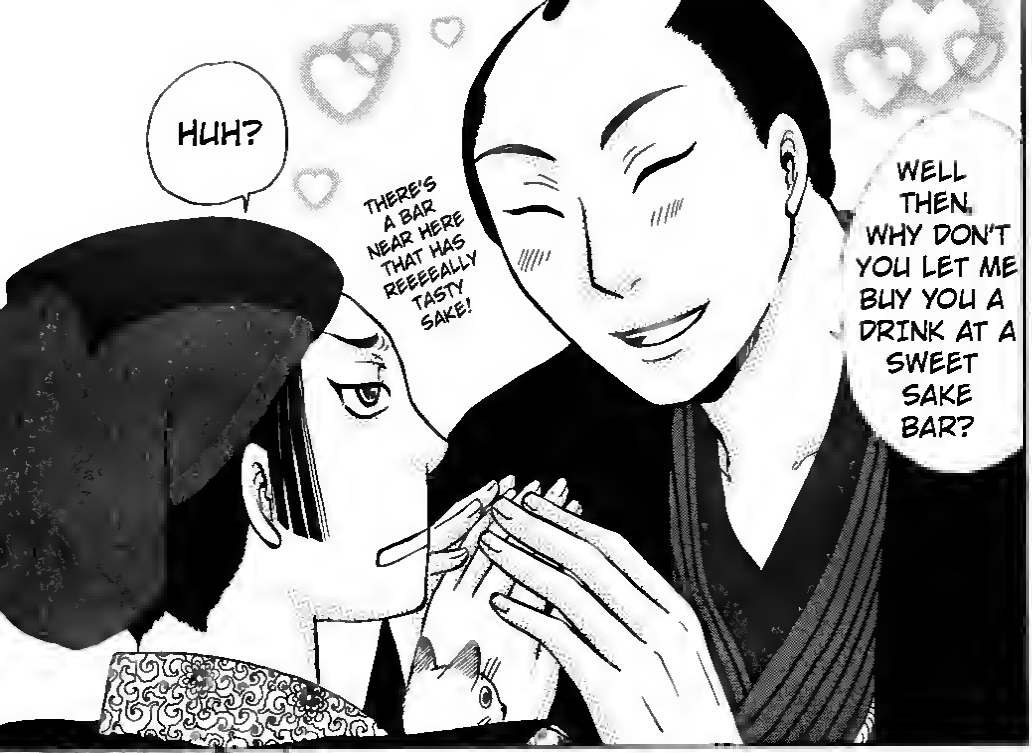
WOW!
PON!
ポォ
PYOOOOO!
AAH!
HUH?
MR. JUBEI, UP THERE! UP THERE!
COME HERE! COME HERE!
THE MOUN-TAIN CAT!

HEY MISTER, YOU'RE SO LUCKY ...
I WANT TO TOUCH THE MOUNTAIN CAT
ぶらら
"DANGLE"
ペそん
SMACK!
AHHH ...
"GRIN"
にゃり
IT SMILED !?
ぶら
"DANGLE"
ぶら
"DANGLE"
NYO HO!
AH.
ひょい
"PICKS UP EFFORTLESSLY"
HMMM... IS THIS A MOUNTAIN CAT?

I... I'M SORRY!
IT'S A VERY WELL MADE DOLL.
"WIGGLE" んにゃ
EVEN THOUGH IT'S A CAT, IT HAS A LONG BODY AND IS LIKE A MIX BETWEEN A WEASEL AND A STOAT.
"WIGGLE" んにゃ
YOU'RE NOT HURT OR ANYTHING ARE YOU?

I WANTED TO LOOK AT IT FOR A LITTLE LONGER
AWWW
WHAT!? I'M RIGHT AS RAIN!
I'M SORRY THAT MY LITTLE ONE CAUSED SUCH A DISTUR-BANCE.
HERE. THIS IS YOUR MOUNTAIN CAT, ISN'T IT?
YES

HUH!? NO, NO! I'M STILL JUST AN UNSKILLED BEGINNER!
YOU'RE YOUNG BUT YOU'RE VERY GOOD.
NOT AT ALL, YOU SHOWED US SOMETHING REALLY GREAT.
I'M KOINO. I'M JUST A WRITER OF CHEAP BOOKS, THOUGH...
HA HA HA... I'VE OFTEN HEARD OF THAT NAME ...
DO YOU LIKE SWEET SAKE?
I... I GUESS SO ...
SQUEEZE
EH? IT'S ISOTA ...
MOVES AWAY
MOVES CLOSER
YOU, WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

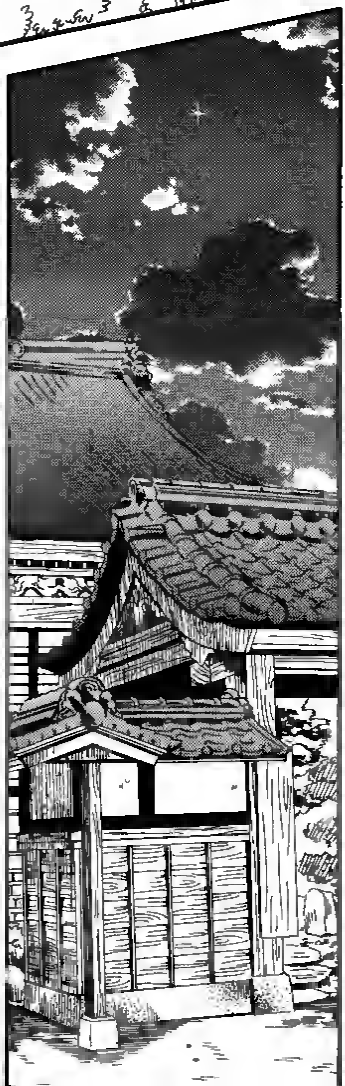

HUH?
THERE'S A BAR NEAR HERE THAT HAS REEEEALLY TASTY SAKE!
WELL THEN, WHY DON'T YOU LET ME BUY YOU A DRINK AT A SWEET SAKE BAR?

*YOSHICHOU IS AN AREA IN WHAT IS NOW TOKYO WHERE A LOT OF YOUNG MEN WORKED IN THE BARS.
HATSUKAZE...! IF YOU WANT TO PICK UP GUYS, GO TO YOSHICHOU*!
BUT MR. JUBEI, THAT PERSON IS...
YOSHICHOU IS INTERESTING TOO. I QUITE LIKE IT, ACTUALLY.
AWWW... WAIT!
WEIRDO!
だだだだ
DASH
OW!
THERE, WE MAY SPEAK TENDERLY TO...
YOU MORON !!
がいん
SMACK!
げしっ
WHACK!

SO, DOESN'T THAT MEAN THAT YOUR BEHAVIOUR IS EVEN WORSE? HUH?
BUT ...
"SQUEEZE"
ぎゅ
...A GIRL.
NYO HO っ にゃに?
.....
"SQUEEZE"
ぎゅ
...I SAW A DEEP SECRET INSIDE THOSE SPARKLING EYES!
HMM ...
CAN WE REALLY LEAVE THINGS LIKE THIS, JUBEI?
I'LL KEEP TRYING! ♡
DON'T RUN AWAY, ISOTA!

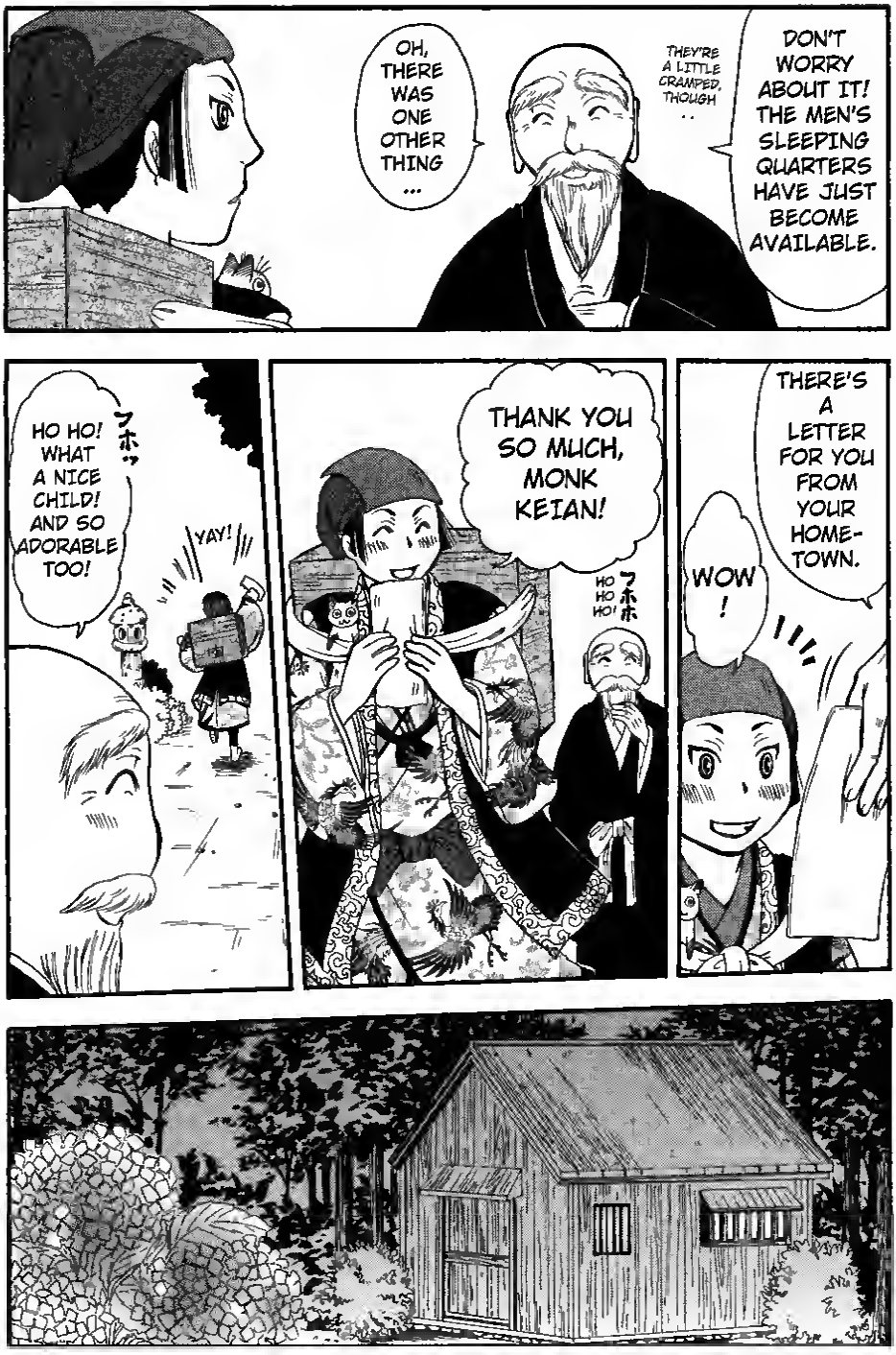
THAT MOUNTAIN CAT IS WITH HER, SHE'LL BE FINE.
まって～お話きかせて～
WAIT! LET ME TALK TO YOU!
AH GEEZ! HE DOESN'T KNOW WHEN TO QUIT!
"FLAP" ぱた "FLAP" ぱた "FLAP" ぱた
しゅるるるん
SWOOSH! "SNAKING MOTION"
WOAH!

*YOMOGI = JAPANESE MUGWORT, A LONG, THIN, SUPPLE PLANT.

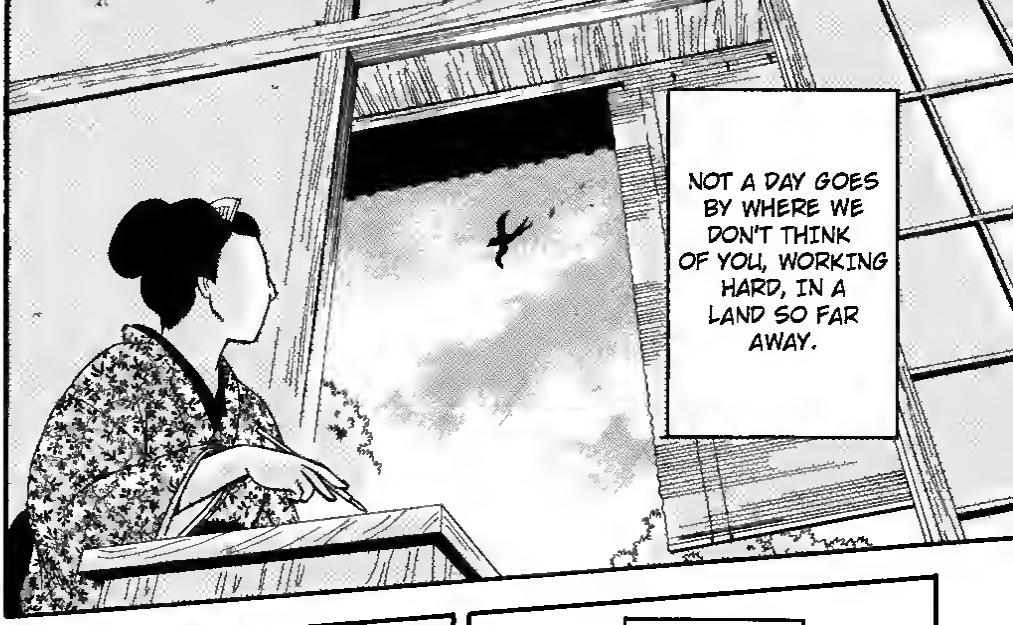


*MANJUU = FILLED STARCH BUNS

I'M LUCKY ENOUGH THAT YOU ALLOW ME TO STAY HERE AT THE TEMPLE.
YOU DON'T NEED TO GIVE ME THAT.
THEY'RE MANJUU* THAT WERE GIVEN TO US BY THE TEMPLE WORSHIPPERS!
YOU'VE BEEN WORKING VERY HARD. HERE, EAT SOMETHING SWEET!

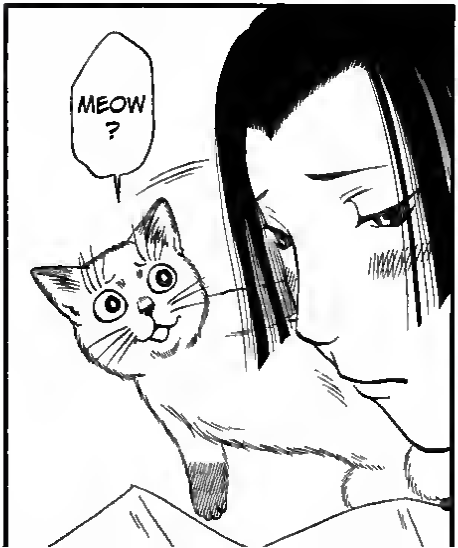

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT! THE MEN'S SLEEPING QUARTERS HAVE JUST BECOME AVAILABLE.
THEY'RE A LITTLE CRAMPED, THOUGH . .
OH, THERE WAS ONE OTHER THING ...
THERE'S A LETTER FOR YOU FROM YOUR HOME-TOWN.
WOW !
THANK YOU SO MUCH, MONK KEIAN!
HO HO HO!
フホホ
HO HO! WHAT A NICE CHILD! AND SO ADORABLE TOO!
フホ?
YAY!

ISOTA, YOMOGI, HAVE YOU BEEN WELL?
OK ...
THANKS TO THE MONEY YOU SENT TO US, YOUR FATHER'S CONDITION HAS IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY.
"FLOMP!"
HEY! DON'T GO READIN' IT BEFORE ME!
"RUSTLE"
MEOW MEOW!
"RUSTLE"
MEOW MEOW!
IT SAYS DAD'S GETTIN' BETTER, YOMOGI!
YOUR FATHER WANTS TO BE ABLE TO GET OUT OF BED AND USE PUPPETS AGAIN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. TRYING TO STOP HIM IS HARD WORK.
HEY, YOU!
WHADYA THINK YOU'RE DOIN'? YOU'RE GONNA MAKE ME ANGRY!
YEAH, BUT YOU'RE ANGRY ALREADY!


NOT A DAY GOES BY WHERE WE DON'T THINK OF YOU, WORKING HARD, IN A LAND SO FAR AWAY.

BEST WISHES, MOTHER
WHEN THE WINTER COMES, WE SHALL RELAX BY TAKING BATHS AT THE HOT SPRINGS WHILE ON OUR TOUR OF THE PROVINCES.

RATHER THAN WORRYING ABOUT US, PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOURSELVES.

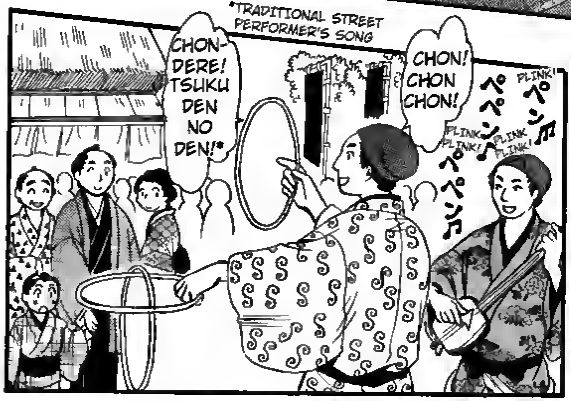

MEOW ?

MEOW MEOW MEOW MEOW !!
"RUB" グリ
"RUB" グリ
"RUB" グリ
Y... YOMOGI! STOP IT, THAT TICKLES!
くり
くり
"STROKE"
"STROKE"
PURR ! ♡
IT'S JUNE NOW ...
MEOW !
JULY
AUGUST
SEPT-EMBER
OCTO-BER
NOVE-MBER
PASSING THROUGH DECEMBER ...
WE WILL BE ABLE TO MEET THEM AGAIN IN ABOUT JANUARY OR FEBRUARY.

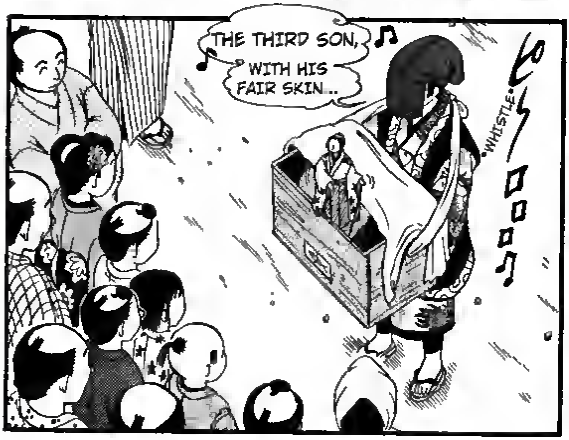
MEOW MEOW !
GETS OUT DRUM STICKS
IT'S SO FAR AWAY ...
JUMP ぴょんっ
DON DON CHAKA!
DON CHAKA!
DON DON CHAKA!
TAT TAT!
DON DON DON!

くるっ
TWIST
ドッドォン♪
DON!
DON!
くるっ
TWIST
ドッドン♪
DON!
DON!
ドンドン♪
DON!
DON!
ドンドン
DON!
DON!
カッカッカッカ
CHAKA!
CHAKAKA!
カッ
CHAKA!
カッ
TAP!
カッ
TAP!
YOU ARE THE NUMBER ONE PERFORMER IN OUR FAMILY, YOMOGI!
MEOW!
HA HA!
ドン
DON!

YEAH!
I'LL BE DEDI-CATED TOO...
...SO MY MOM AND DAD CAN LIVE IN COMFORT!
AND YOU TOO, OF COURSE YOMOGI!!

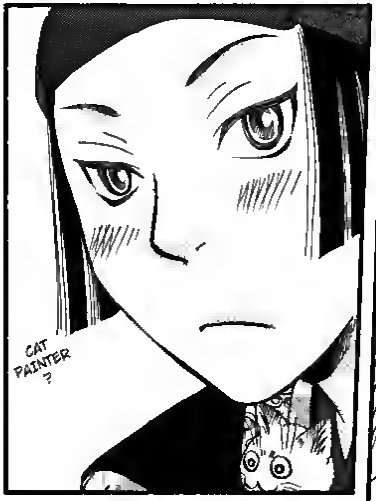

*TRADITIONAL STREET PERFORMER'S SONG
CHON-DERE! TSUKU DEN NO DEN!*
CHON! CHON CHON!
PLINK!
PLINK PLINK!
PLINK PLINK!

DON DON!
DON DON!
WHISTLE
PLINK!
CHATTER
CHATTER

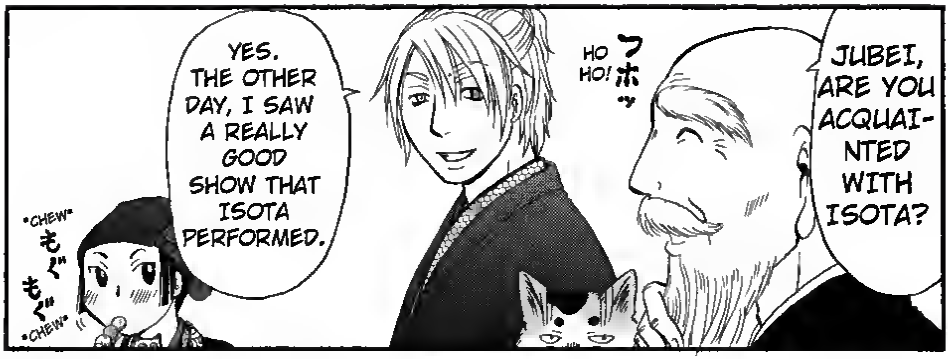

THE THIRD SON, WITH HIS FAIR SKIN...
WHISTLE

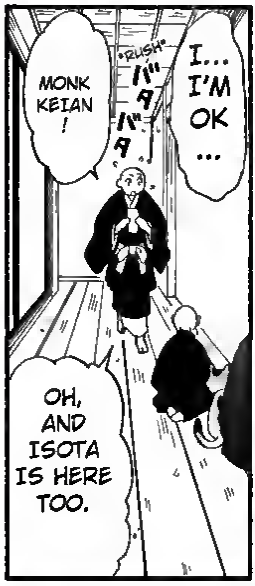
THE TEMPLE PAGE-BOY WITH THE SPEAR-PLUM YOSHIMI AND THE COLORS OF THE SUNSET SHADOWS.
DON!
KA KA KA KA CHAKA CHAKA
DON! DON! DON!
WITH THAT AND OSHICHI BEHIND
"WHISTLE"
"WHISTLE"
NOW YOSHINO'S FLOWERS ARE IN FULL BLOOM.
HMM
OH, ISOTA ...!

AWW! I JUST WANT TO TALK!
"DASH" ダッ
ザワ "MURMUR"
ザワ "MURMUR"
HEEEEY!
"WAVE" ふん
"WAVE" ふん
FLOWERS ♪ ...
WHISTLE♪
HERE, HAVE SOME TEA.
OH! HEY, THANKS!
RECENTLY, BUSINESS HAS BEEN GOING REALLY BADLY!
ぜぃ PUFF
ぜぃ HUFF
ARGH! THAT MORON SHOWS UP EVERY TIME!

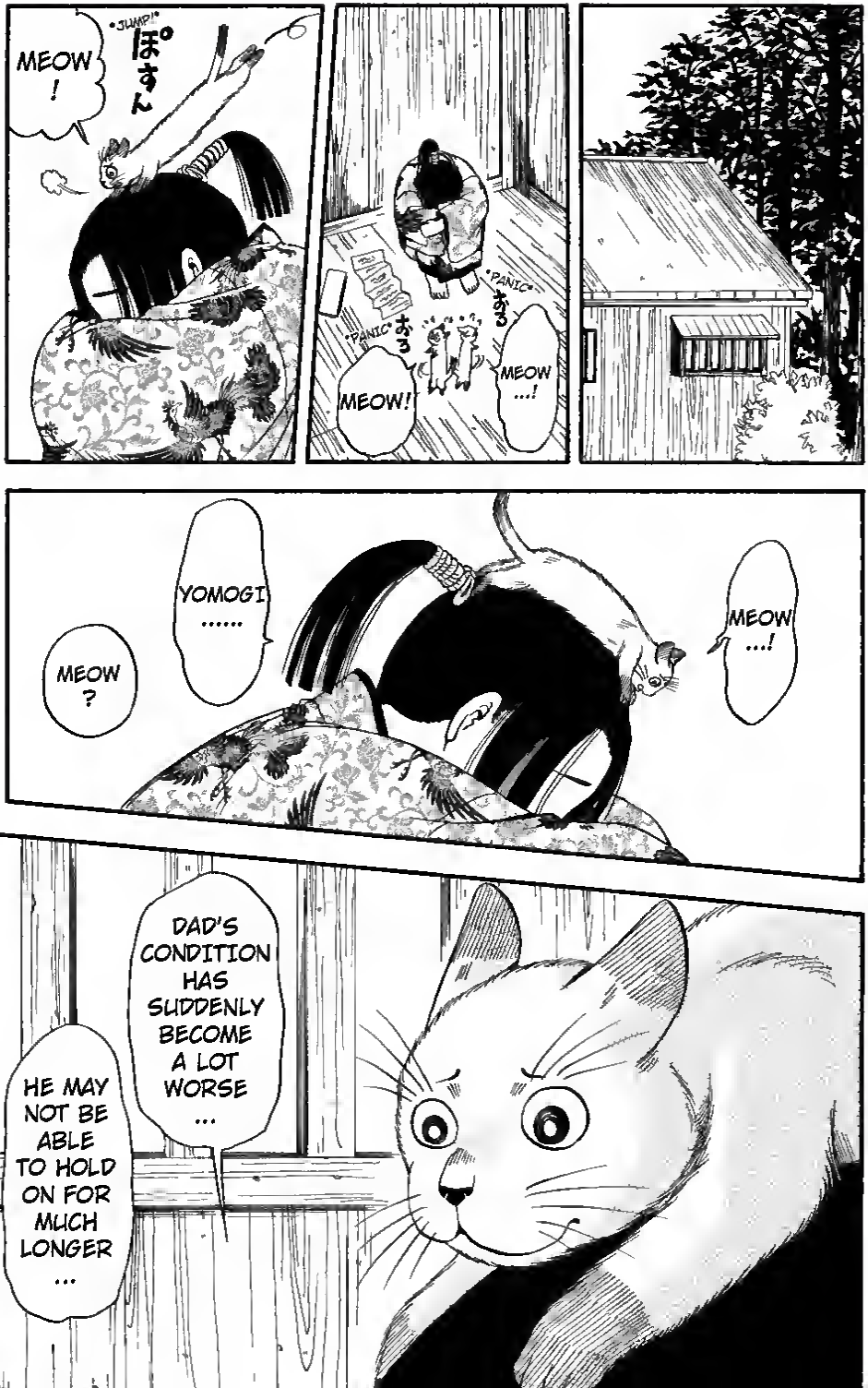


*DANGO = SWEET DUMPLINGS, USUALLY ON SKEWERS


JUBEI, ARE YOU ACQUAINTED WITH ISOTA?
HO HO! フホッ
YES. THE OTHER DAY, I SAW A REALLY GOOD SHOW THAT ISOTA PERFORMED.
"CHEW" もぐ もぐ "CHEW"



*THIS IS A LETTER DELIVERED BY A COURIER THAT TRAVELS DAY AND NIGHT, SIMILAR TO EXPRESS DELIVERY WITH THE POSTAL SERVICE
**SETTSU = PART OF WHAT IS NOW OSAKA AND HYOGO.

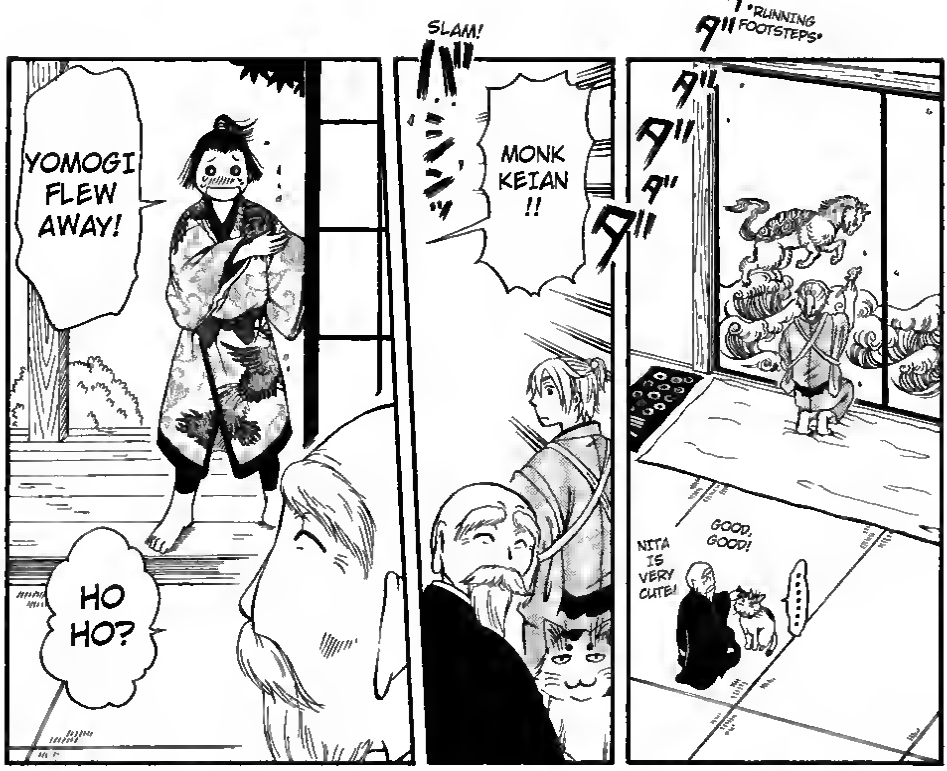

MEOW!
"JUMP!"
ぽすん
"PANIC"
おろ
MEOW!!
"PANIC"
おろ
MEOW...!
MEOW?
YOMOGI.....
MEOW...!
DAD'S CONDITION HAS SUDDENLY BECOME A LOT WORSE...
HE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO HOLD ON FOR MUCH LONGER...

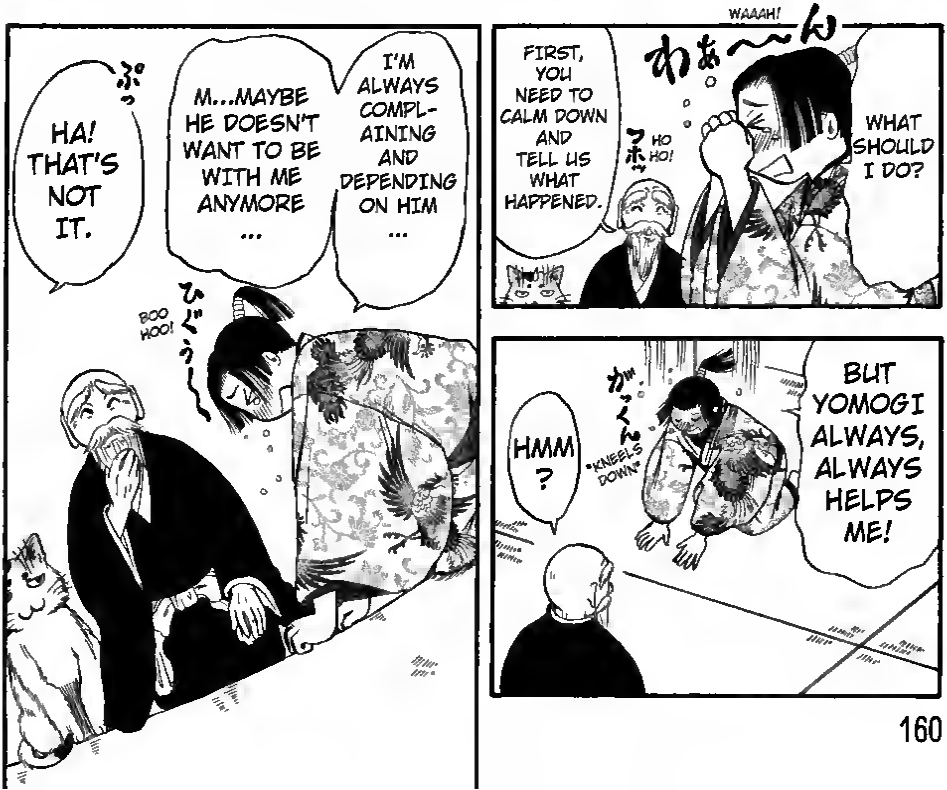
SO IT SAYS TO ...
PREPARE FOR THE WORST !

I... I WANT TO GO BACK BUT...
... I JUST SENT ALL THE MONEY.

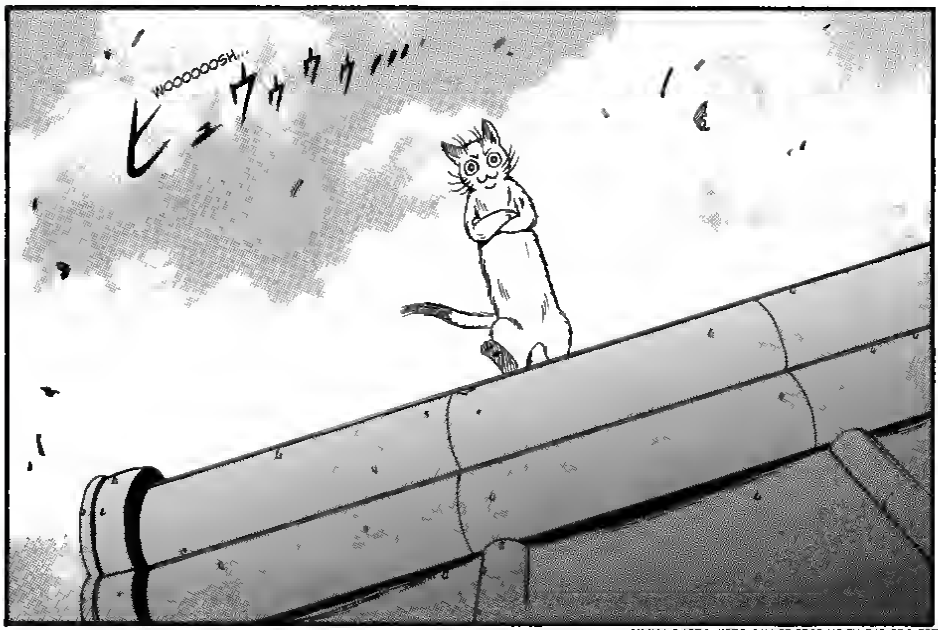
I DUNNO WH.. WHAT TO DO ...
Y'KNOW, YOMOGI ...?

GETS UP
くっすん
MEOW!
.....
WHIMPER
YOMOGI?
HEY!
MEOW!
ん～よっぴ
BOING!
MEOW...!
WHERE ARE YA GOIN'?
ぴょ～ん
BOING!

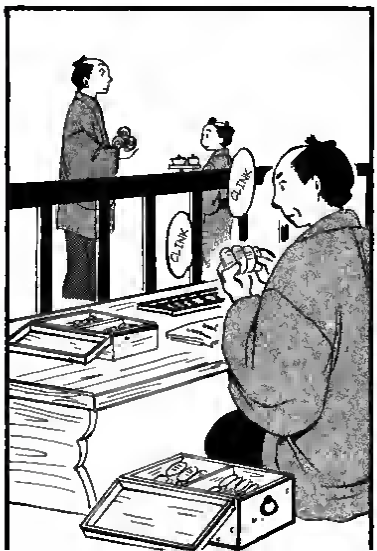

YOMOGI FLEW AWAY!
HO HO?
SLAM!
シン…
MONK KEIAN !!
タ"タ"タ"タ"
"RUNNING FOOTSTEPS"
NITA IS VERY CUTE!
GOOD, GOOD!


HA! THAT'S NOT IT.
ぷっ
M...MAYBE HE DOESN'T WANT TO BE WITH ME ANYMORE ...
I'M ALWAYS COMPL-AINING AND DEPENDING ON HIM ...
BOO HOO!
ひぐっ
FIRST, YOU NEED TO CALM DOWN AND TELL US WHAT HAPPENED.
HO HO!
フホッ
わぁ～ん
WAAAH!
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
BUT YOMOGI ALWAYS, ALWAYS HELPS ME!
HMM ?
"KNEELS DOWN"
がっくん

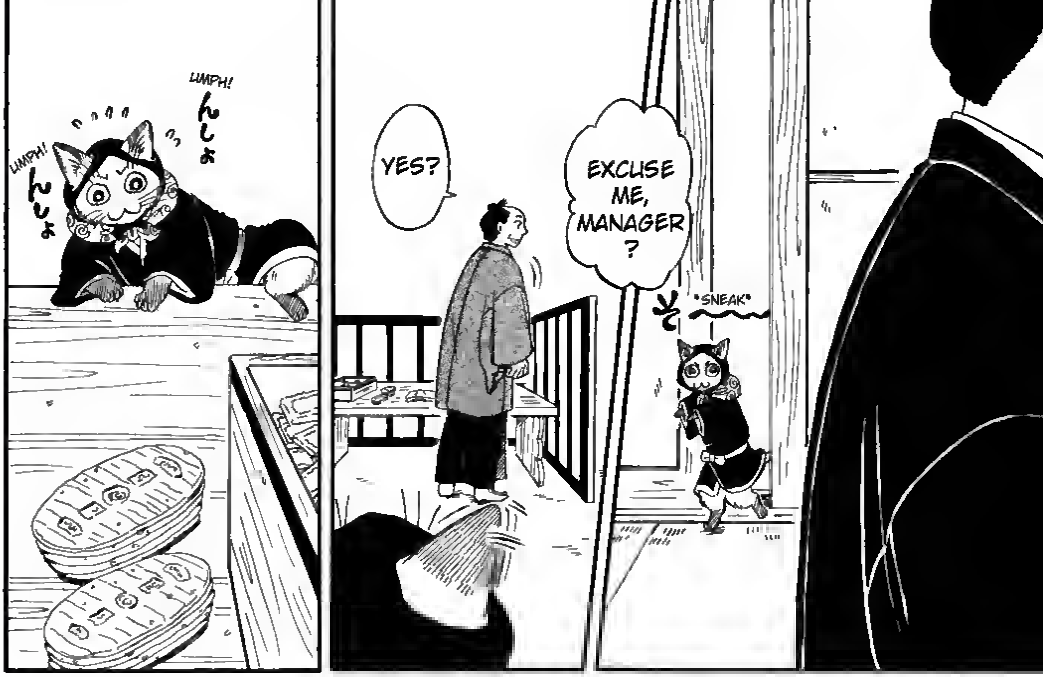
CREATURES LIKE THAT ARE ALWAYS TRUE TO THEMSELVES.
COULD IT BE?
はっ
AH!
HE LIKES YOU, INCLUDING ALL OF YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES AND THAT'S WHY HE'S WITH YOU.
I SAID I HAD NO MONEY, SO HE'S GONE TO SELL HIMSELF TO A SHOW HOUSE!
NO, THAT'S CRAZY! DON'T DO IT, YOMOGI!
YOU'RE THE ONE THAT'S CRAZY.
だっ
"DASH"
ガッ
"GRAB"



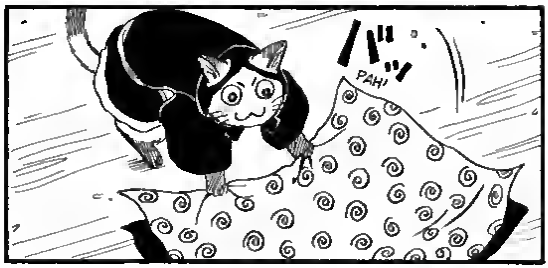
*MANY SHOPS WERE CALLED "ISEYA" IN THE EDO PERIOD SELLING A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT PRODUCTS

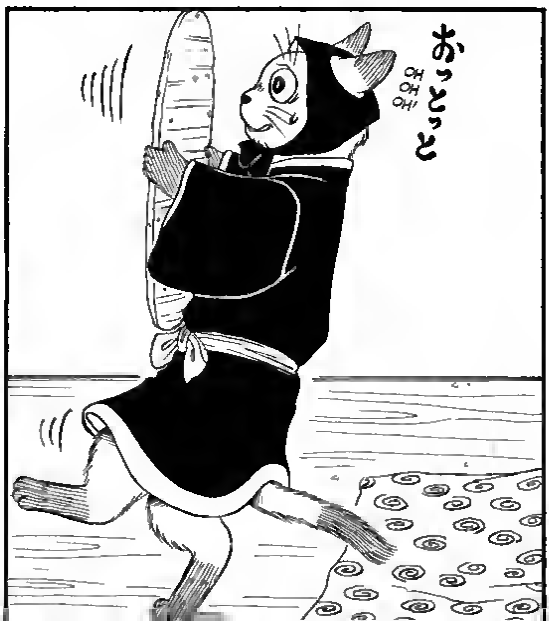


ポン
PUFF!
MEOW!
キュ
"TIES IT TIGHTLY"
シュッ
SHUP!
MEOW !!
"TADA!"
ばーーん


LUMPH!
んしょ
LUMPH!
んしょ
YES?
EXCUSE ME, MANAGER?
SNEAK

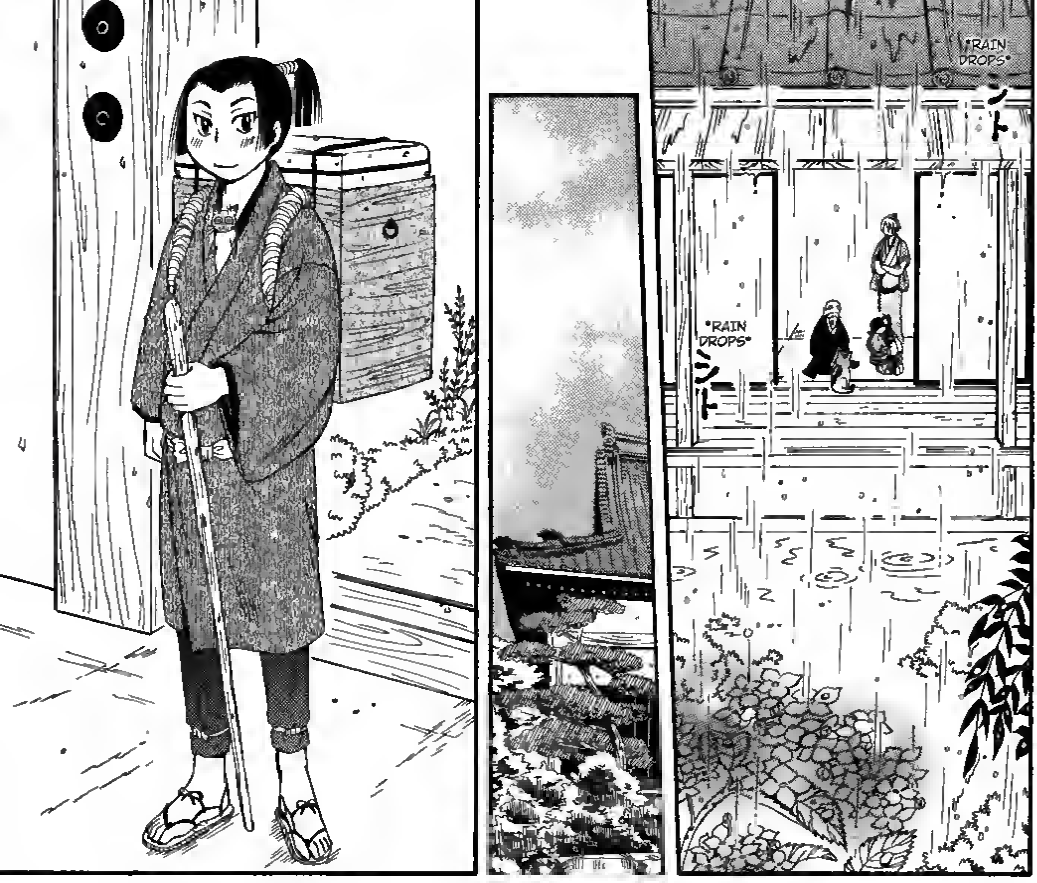
HEY YOU! THE CAT THAT LOOKS JUST LIKE A THIEF!
MEOW MEOW!

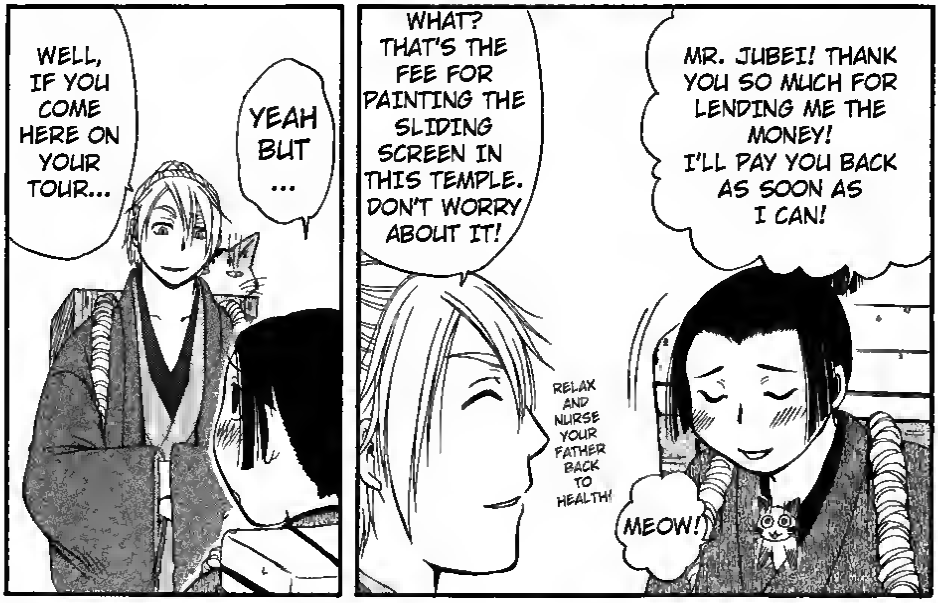

PAH!

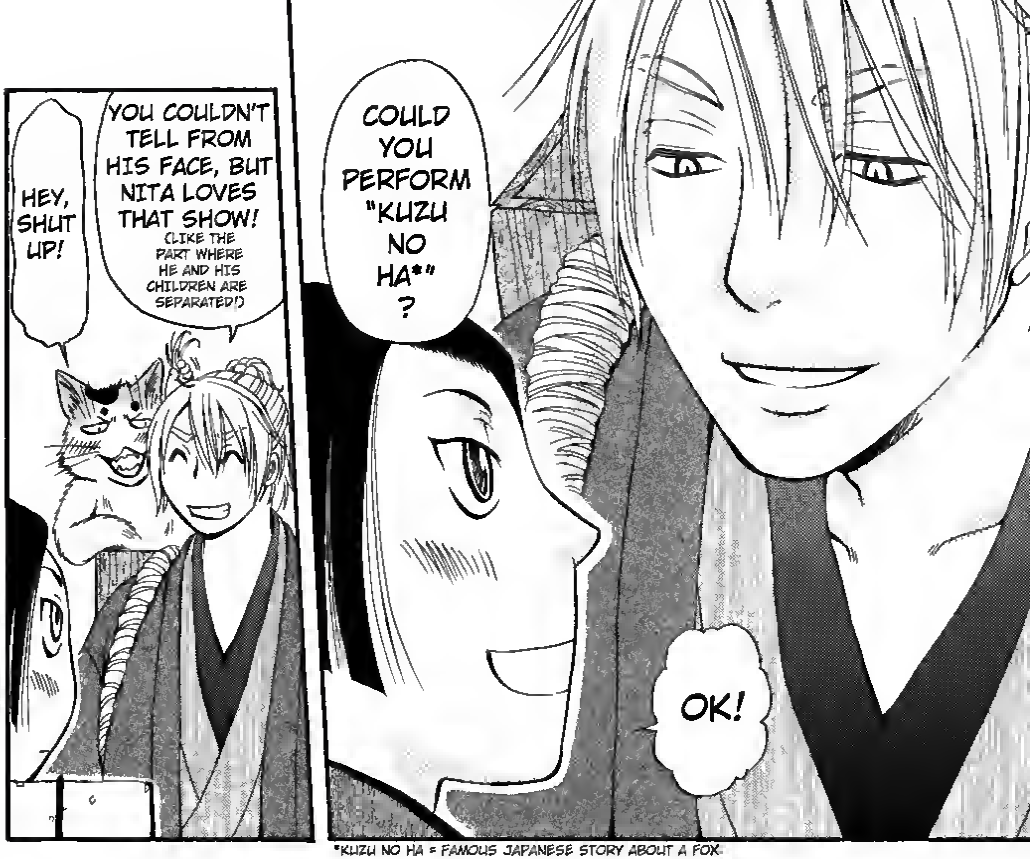

おっとっと
OH OH OH!

HEY! IF YOU DO ANYTHING BAD, I'LL EAT YOU!
DON'T WEAR SUCH A SHOWY OUTFIT!
MEOOOOOOW!
HMM
COME ON.
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.
MEOW!
"FOOT-STEPS"
"MURMURING"
HEY, DO YOU THINK SHE'D BE HAPPY WITH STOLEN MONEY?
MEOW MEOW...
RATHER THAN DOING SOMETHING STUPID LIKE THAT...
...IF YOU WERE BY HER SIDE, SHE WOULD FEEL MUCH MORE REASSURED.
THAT'S WHAT IT MEANS TO BE PARTNERS, RIGHT?
MEOW...

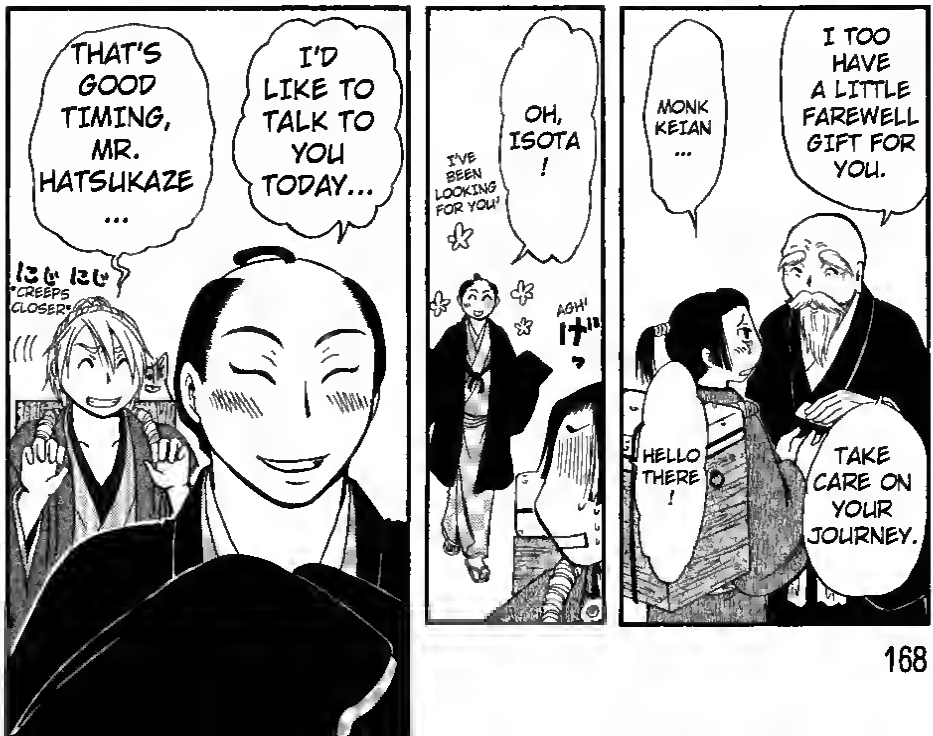
ゴロ
RUMBLE
ゴロゴロ
RUMBLE
ゴロ
RUMBLE
OK.
LET'S GO BACK.
NOD NOD
こくこく
ゴロ
RUMBLE
ゴロ
RUMBLE
ゴロ
RUMBLE
DISTANT THUNDER HUH?
IT'LL SOON BE THE START OF THE RAINY SEASON.

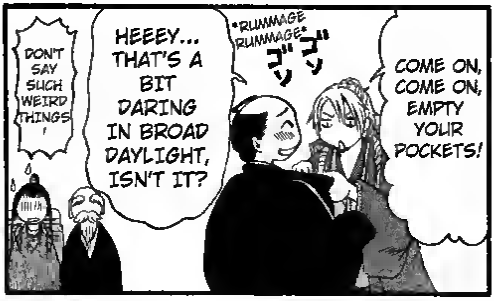

RAIN DROPS
シト
RAIN DROPS
シト

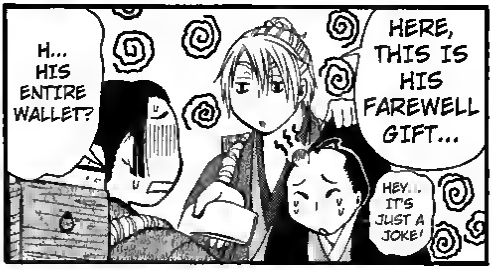

WELL, IF YOU COME HERE ON YOUR TOUR...
YEAH BUT ...
WHAT? THAT'S THE FEE FOR PAINTING THE SLIDING SCREEN IN THIS TEMPLE. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT!
MR. JUBEI! THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR LENDING ME THE MONEY! I'LL PAY YOU BACK AS SOON AS I CAN!
RELAX AND NURSE YOUR FATHER BACK TO HEALTH!
MEOW!


COULD YOU PERFORM "KUZU NO HA*" ?
OK!
YOU COULDN'T TELL FROM HIS FACE, BUT NITA LOVES THAT SHOW!
(LIKE THE PART WHERE HE AND HIS CHILDREN ARE SEPARATED!)
HEY, SHUT UP!

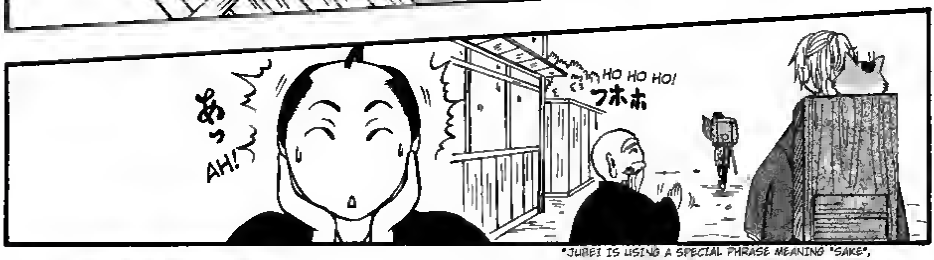
*KUZU NO HA = FAMOUS JAPANESE STORY ABOUT A FOX.


I TOO HAVE A LITTLE FAREWELL GIFT FOR YOU.
MONK KEIAN ...
TAKE CARE ON YOUR JOURNEY.
HELLO THERE !
OH, ISOTA !
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU!
AGH!
I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU TODAY...
THAT'S GOOD TIMING, MR. HATSUKAZE ...
にじ にじ
CREEPS CLOSER

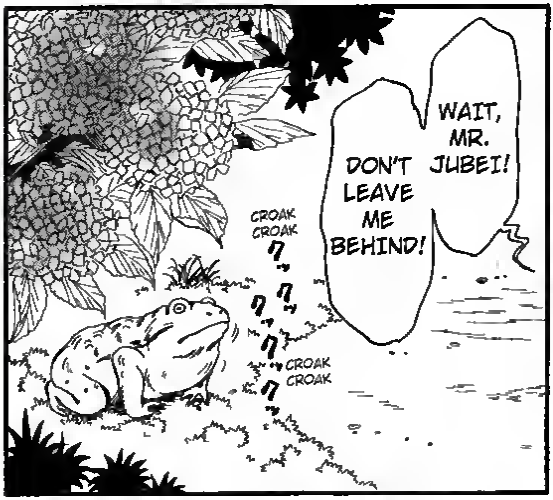

DON'T SAY SUCH WEIRD THINGS!
HEEEY... THAT'S A BIT DARING IN BROAD DAYLIGHT, ISN'T IT?
*RUMMAGE RUMMAGE
ゴソ ゴソ
COME ON, COME ON, EMPTY YOUR POCKETS!



*HAYAKAGO = A CARRIAGE THAT IS CARRIED BY TWO PEOPLE. AN EXPENSIVE MODE OF TRANSPORT KNOWN AS A "PALANQUIN" IN ENGLISH



*JUBEI IS USING A SPECIAL PHRASE MEANING "SAKE", WHICH COMES FROM THE SECRET LANGUAGE OF PRIESTS

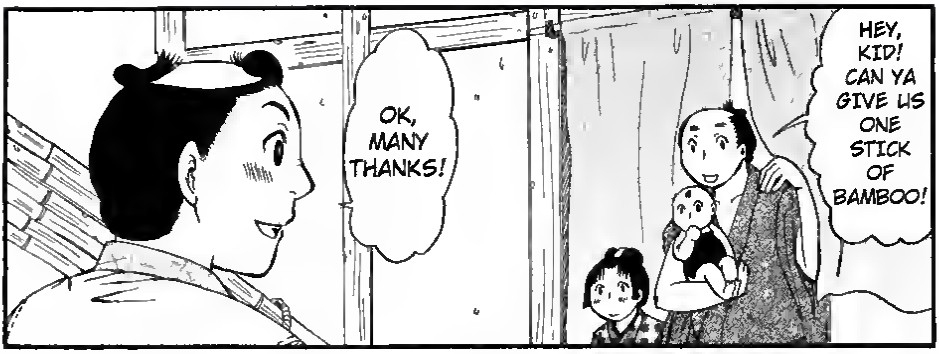


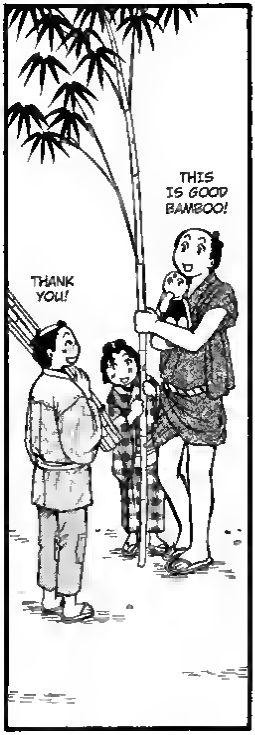
AAAGGHH! I FORGOT TO ASK HER THE SECRET OF THE PUPPETS!
MONK-KEIAN, HOW ABOUT A CUP OF "WISDOM WINE"?
I GUESS IT'S FINE ONCE IN A WHILE!
HO HO!

第十七話 完
END OF CHAPTER 17

猫絵十兵衛
御伽草紙
TALES OF A CAT PAINTER
CAT PLAYING WITH THE STARS
星遊び猫の巻
SAKE

NOTE BAMBOO IS SOLD BEFORE THE SUMMER FESTIVAL OF "TANABATA" HELD ON JULY 7th EACH YEAR. PEOPLE WRITE THEIR WISHES ON LONG PIECES OF CARD OR PAPER AND TIE THEM TO THE BRANCHES OF THE BAMBOO. THE BAMBOO IS LATER BURNED AND THE WISHES ARE SENT TO THE HEAVENS. WATCHING THE STARS IS ANOTHER IMPORTANT PART OF THIS FESTIVAL.

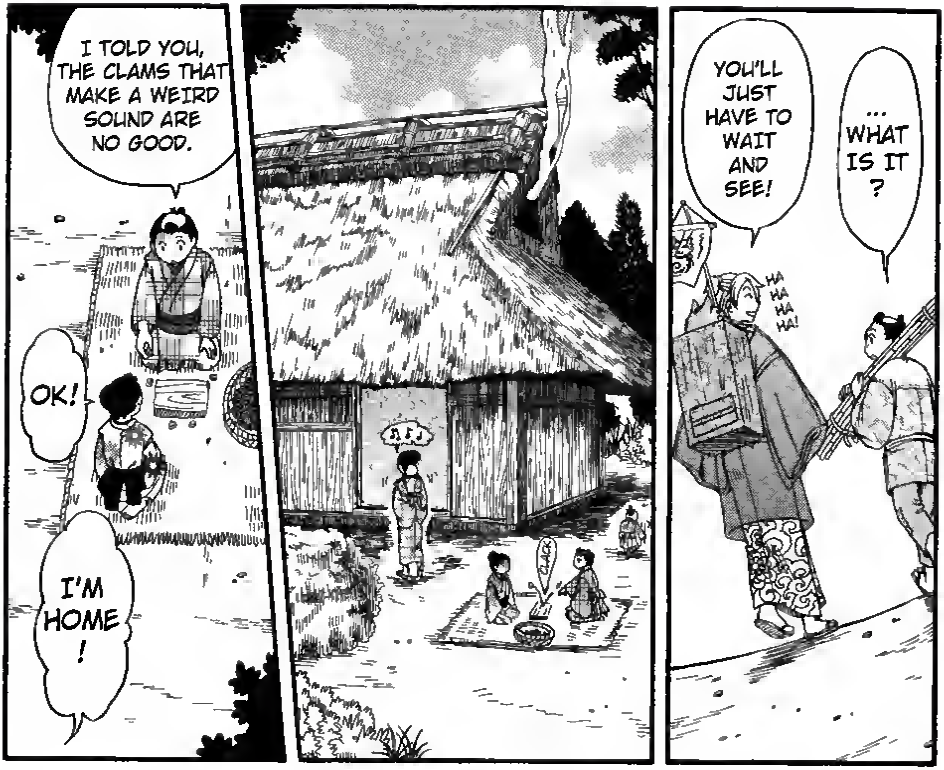


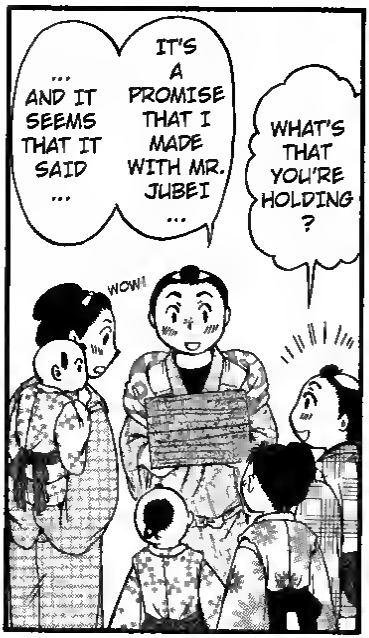


*TANZAKU CARDS ARE USED FOR WRITING TANABATA WISHES

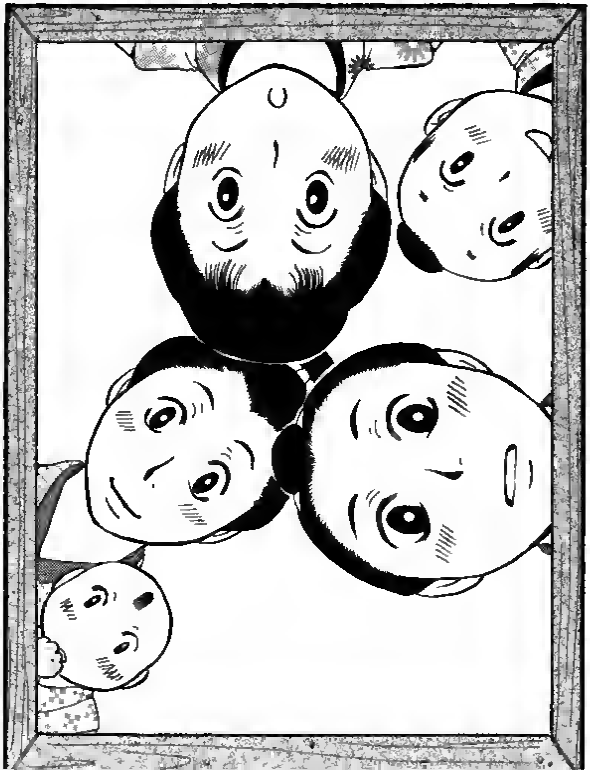
HERE YOU GO.
I HOPE YOUR WISH COMES TRUE.
I'LL TAKE TWO, PLEASE!
OK, THANK YOU!
MR. JUBEI!
I'LL TAKE THREE!
OH MATSU-KICHI!
ARE YOU SELLING BAMBOO FOR TANABATA?
YES!
ARE YOU SELLING TANZAKU CARDS FOR TANABATA, MR. JUBEI?
WELL YEAH, IT'S A LITTLE SIDE-JOB.

IT'S BECAUSE TANABATA BAMBOO SELLS REALLY WELL!
ALSO, THERE'S A LOT GROWING AROUND OUR HOUSE.
YEAH, MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS ARE DOING MY SHARE OF THE WORK.
SO, TODAY YOU'RE TAKING A BREAK FROM CATCHING SHIJIMI CLAMS?
SEE YOU AGAIN!
BYE BYE, MR. CAT PAINTER!
NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO BE IN BUSINESS!
HEH HEH!
YEAH, BEING A GOOD SALESMAN IS A WONDERFUL THING!
I WANT SOME BAMBOO TOO, SO COME BY MY PLACE ON CAT STREET.
IT'S JUST AROUND THE CORNER
ALSO, THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO GIVE TO YOU.
PAT ポン
PAT ポン
SOME-THING YOU WANT TO GIVE ME...?

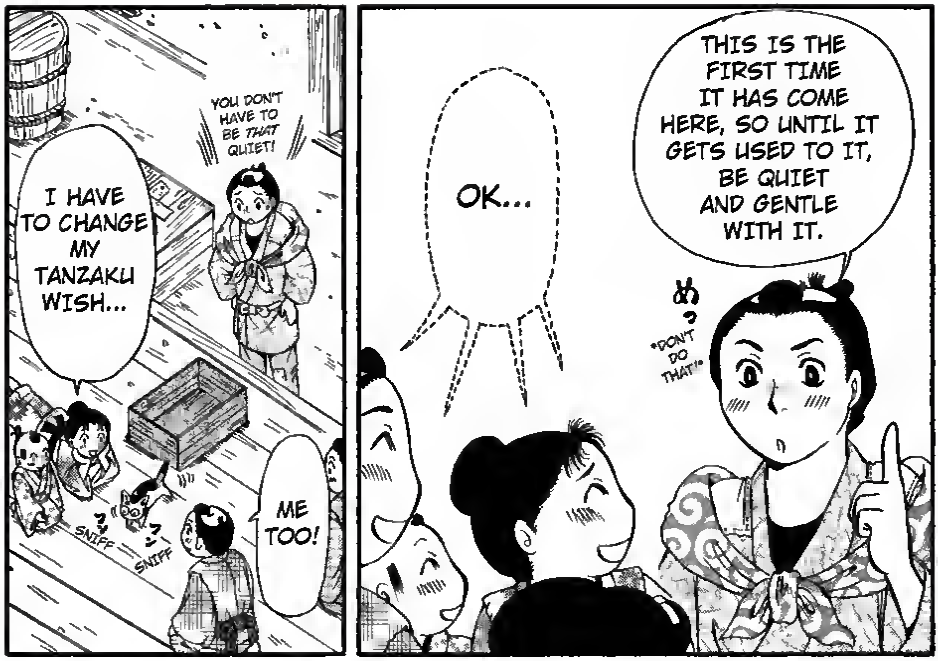

I TOLD YOU, THE CLAMS THAT MAKE A WEIRD SOUND ARE NO GOOD.
OK!
I'M HOME!
YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE!
... WHAT IS IT ?
HA HA HA HA!


... AND IT SEEMS THAT IT SAID ...
IT'S A PROMISE THAT I MADE WITH MR. JUBEI ...
WHAT'S THAT YOU'RE HOLDING ?
WOW!

WELCOME BACK MATSUKICHI!
AH ..?

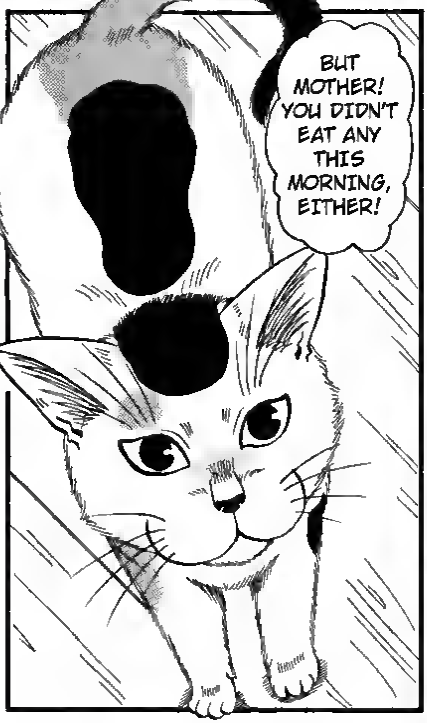


*TORTOISESHELL - A TYPE OF CAT WITH FUR OF THREE OR MORE DIFFERENT COLORS

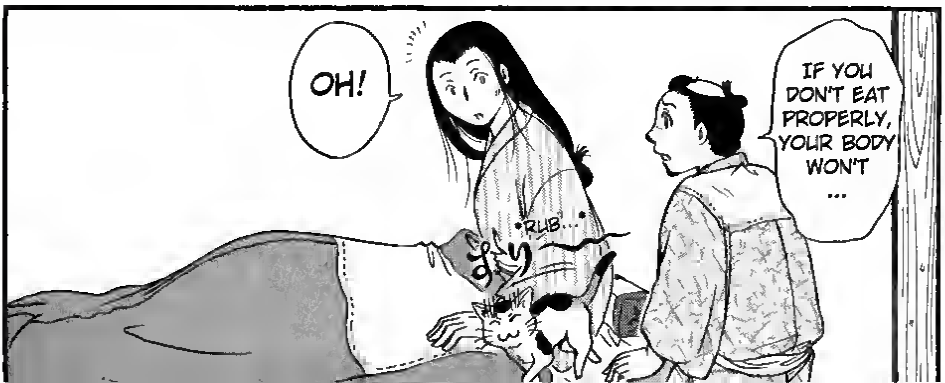

I HAVE TO CHANGE MY TANZAKU WISH...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THAT QUIET!
SNIFF
SNIFF
ME TOO!
OK...
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME IT HAS COME HERE, SO UNTIL IT GETS USED TO IT, BE QUIET AND GENTLE WITH IT.
"DON'T DO THAT!"

THERE'S NONE LEFT, TOKUJI!
TANZAKU CARD: I WOULD LIKE A CAT
TANZAKU CARD: I WISH FOR A CAT TO COME TO OUR HOUSE
I WONDER IF WE HAVE ANY PAPER LEFT...

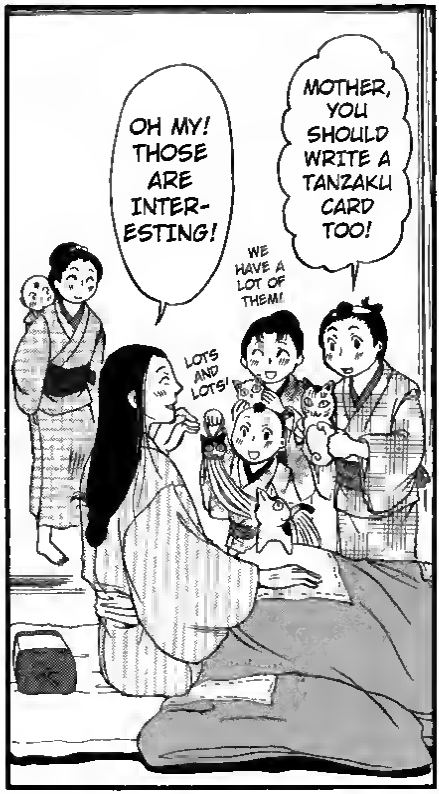
OH! THEY'RE BEAUTIFUL!
I EXCHANGED THEM FOR SOME BAMBOO AT MR. JUBEI'S PLACE!
HEAPS OF THINGS
どっさり
LOOK, I'VE GOT TANZAKU CARDS AND TANABATA DECOR-ATIONS!

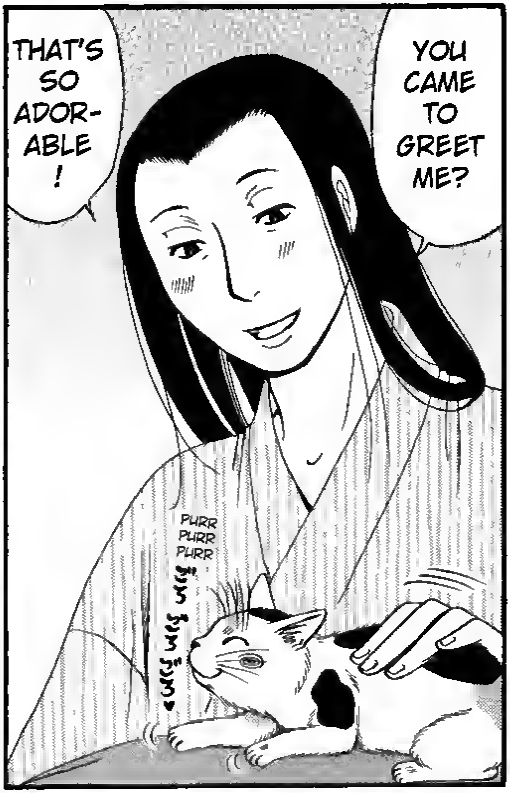


*KAYU = RICE PORRIDGE, OFTEN GIVEN TO SICK PEOPLE.

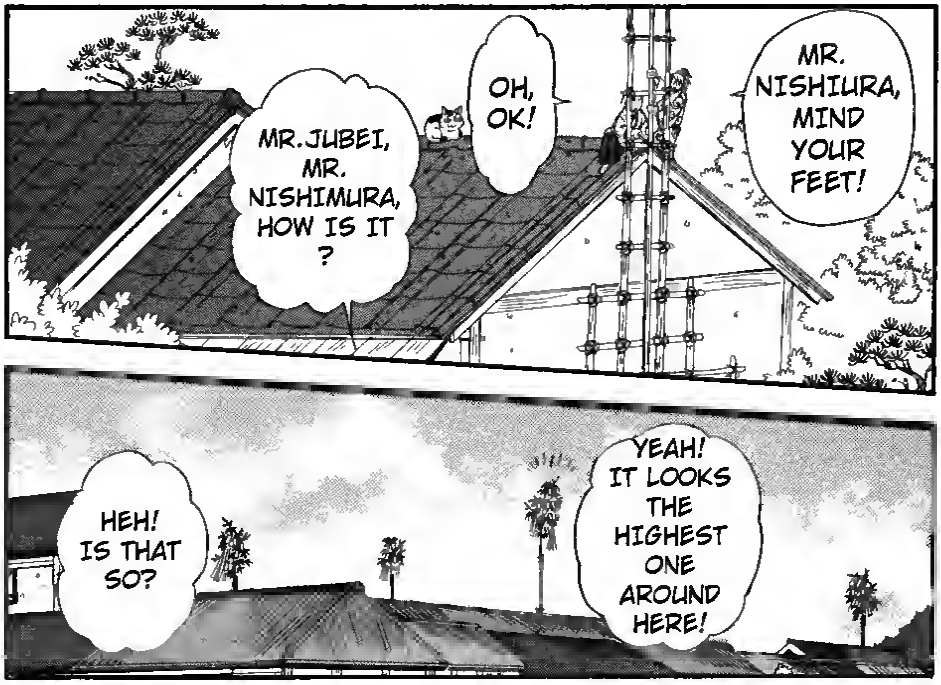


MEOW!


MOTHER, YOU SHOULD WRITE A TANZAKU CARD TOO!
OH MY! THOSE ARE INTER-ESTING!
WE HAVE A LOT OF THEM!
LOTS AND LOTS!


YOU CAME TO GREET ME?
THAT'S SO ADOR-ABLE!
PURR PURR PURR

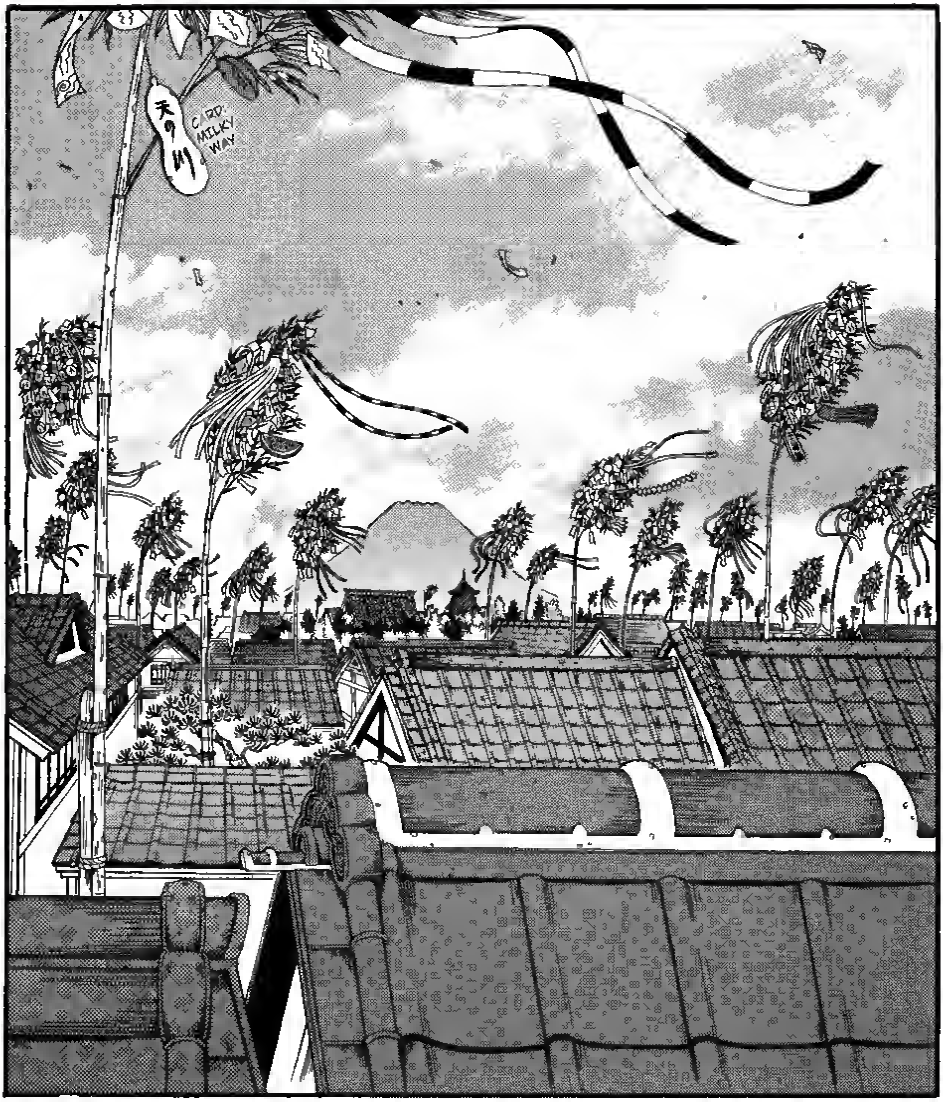
わさっ
RUSTLE
ALRIGHT! A LITTLE TO THE RIGHT, A LITTLE MORE!
THESE TANABATA DECORATIONS ARE COVERED IN CATS!
わっさり
HEAVY RUSTLING
じゃうまくなりますように
CARD: I WISH FOR MY HAND-WRITING TO IMPROVE - SAKICHI


MR. NISHIURA, MIND YOUR FEET!
OH, OK!
MR. JUBEI, MR. NISHIMURA, HOW IS IT ?
YEAH! IT LOOKS THE HIGHEST ONE AROUND HERE!
HEH! IS THAT SO?

GAH HA HA HA HA HA!
CARPENTER
PLASTERER
YOU'RE GREAT, DAD!
WOW
WE CAN'T LOSE TO THE NEIGHBORING INARI* TERRACE!
MEOW
NO MATTER HOW HIGH YOU MAKE THE POLE, IT WON'T WOBBLE AT ALL!
MR. BUNKICHI AND I MADE THE SCAFFOLDING.
OHH

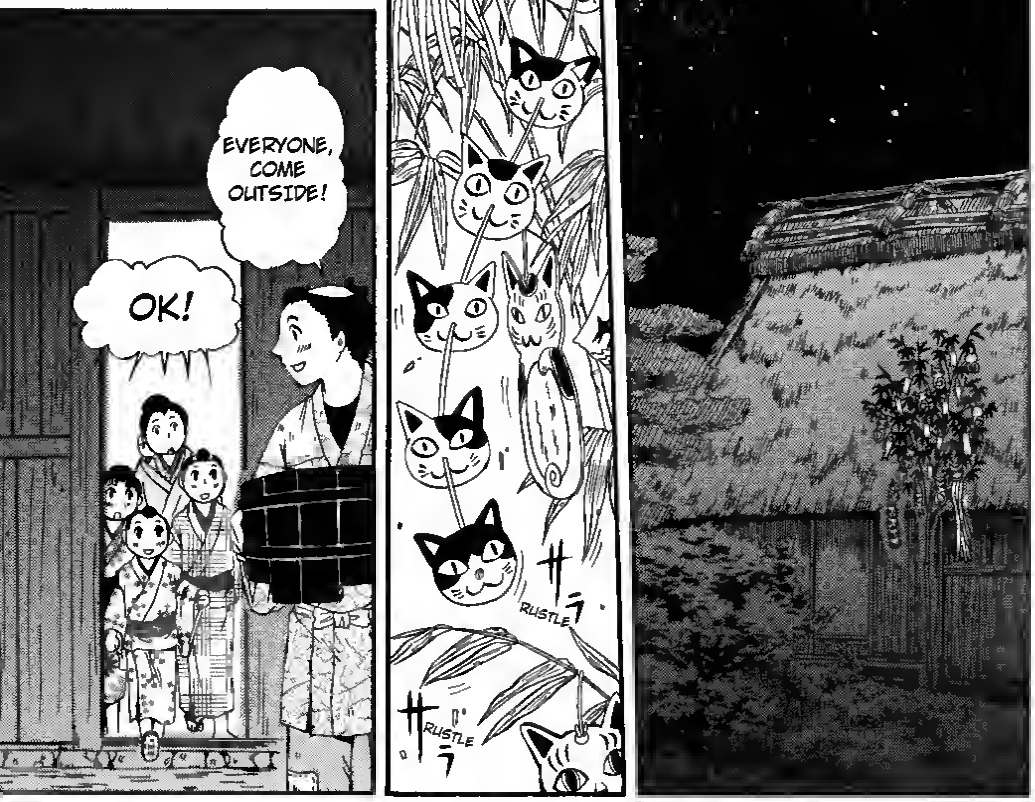
*INARI = THE GOD OF HARVESTS, WHOSE GUARDIANS ARE FOXES

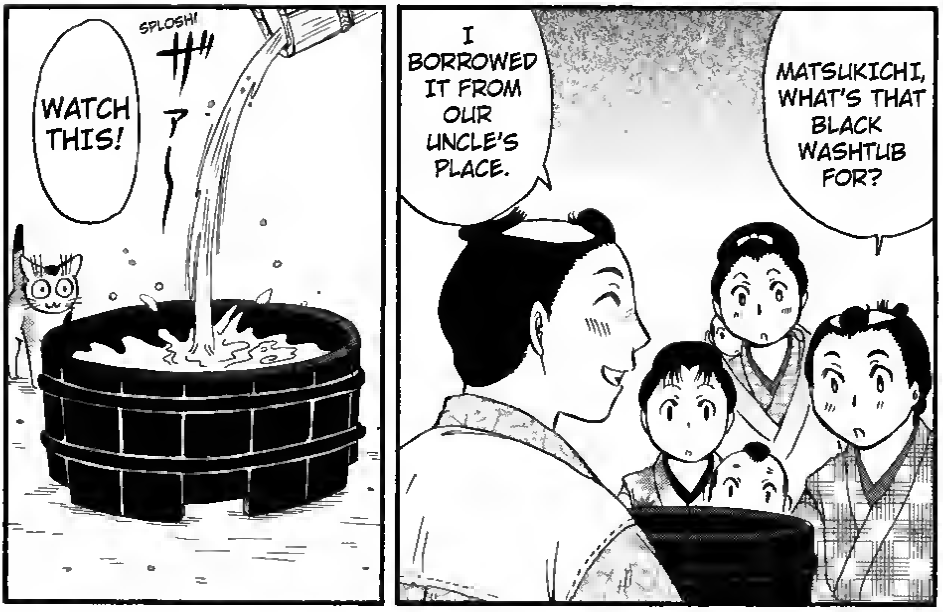
HEY, LOOK OVER THERE!
HA HA HA HA !!
THAT'S OK ISN'T IT?
THE BAMBOO TANZAKU DECORATION REALLY SUITS CAT STREET ...
FLUTTER
IT FELL OFF?
EEK!
OK! THAT WON'T WOBBLE!
HMM? WHAT'S UP, MR. NISHIURA?
NOTHING, IT'S JUST THAT ...


天の川
C. TRD. MILKY WAY

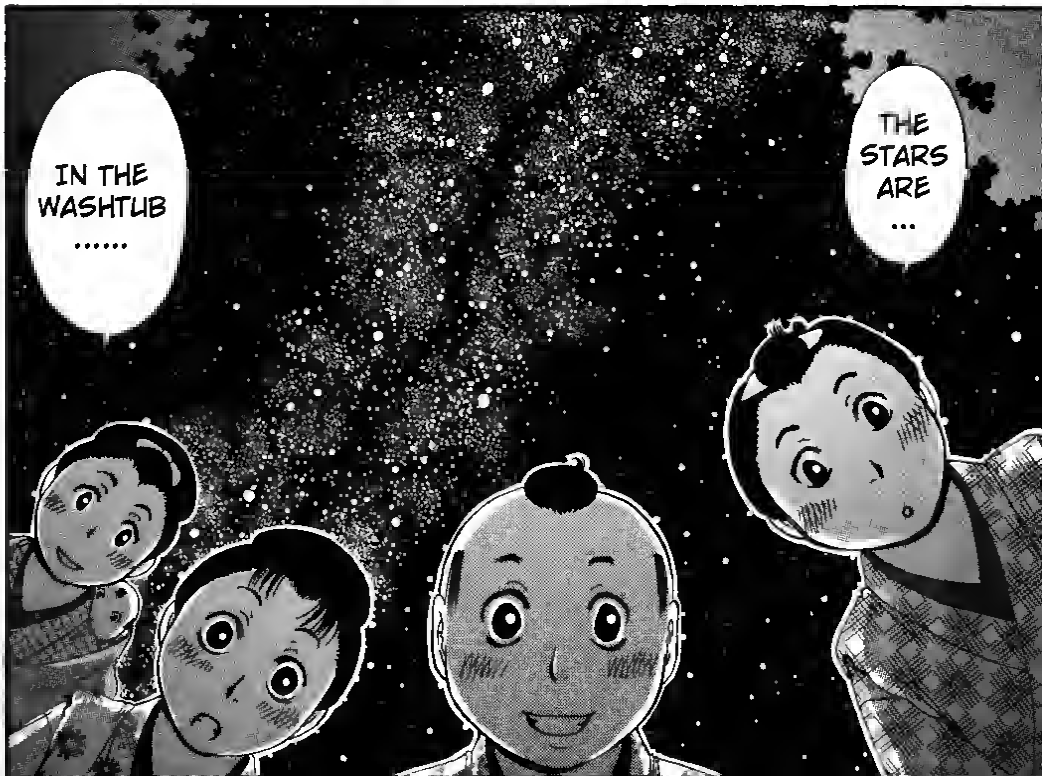
THE WISHES MADE FOR THE FESTIVAL OF STARS* ...
TO SEE SO MANY OF THESE PRAYERS ...
I WONDER WHAT PRINCE KENGYUU AND PRINCESS SHOKUJO** MUST BE THINKING AS THEY LOOK DOWN FROM THE HEAVENS...
*ANOTHER NAME FOR THE TANABATA FESTIVAL
**THE TANABATA FESTIVAL CELEBRATES THE ONE DAY OF THE YEAR WHERE THESE TWO HEAVENLY BEINGS MAY CROSS THE MILKY WAY TO SEE ONE ANOTHER.

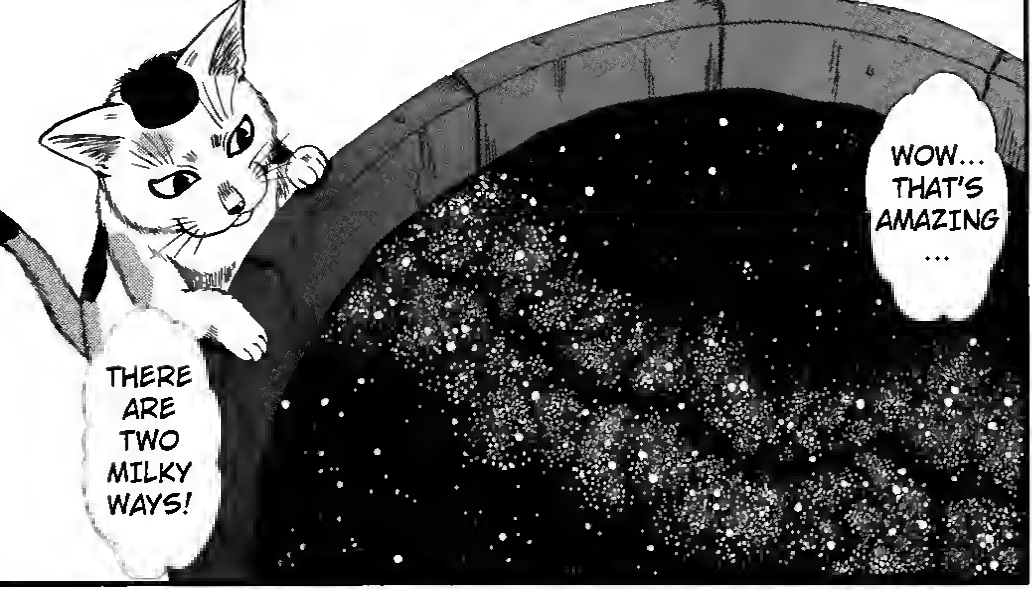
I... I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE HEAVENS BUT...
I DO THINK IT'S EXTREMELY BEAUTIFUL.
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT. IT IS BEAUTIFUL.
あはは AHAHAHA

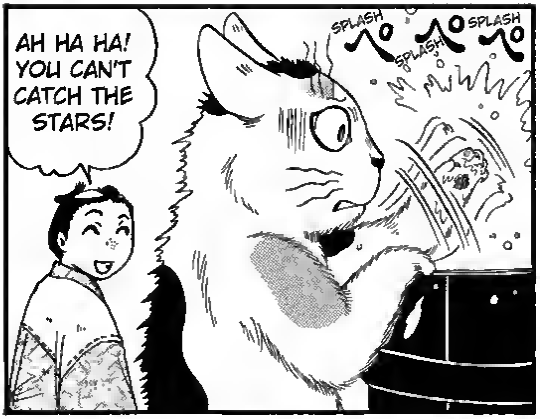

EVERYONE, COME OUTSIDE!
OK!
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

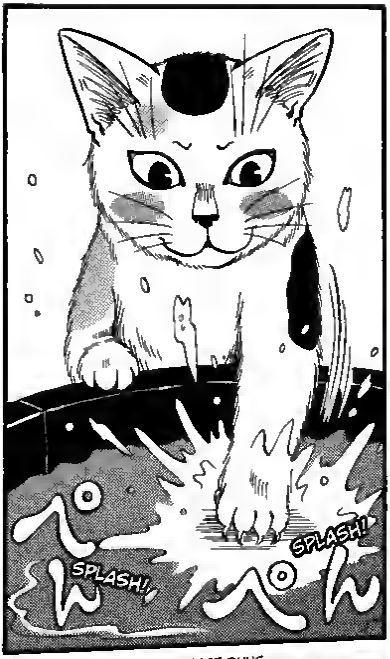

SPLOSH!
WATCH THIS!
I BORROWED IT FROM OUR UNCLE'S PLACE.
MATSUKICHI, WHAT'S THAT BLACK WASHTUB FOR?

SLOSH!
ゆらっ

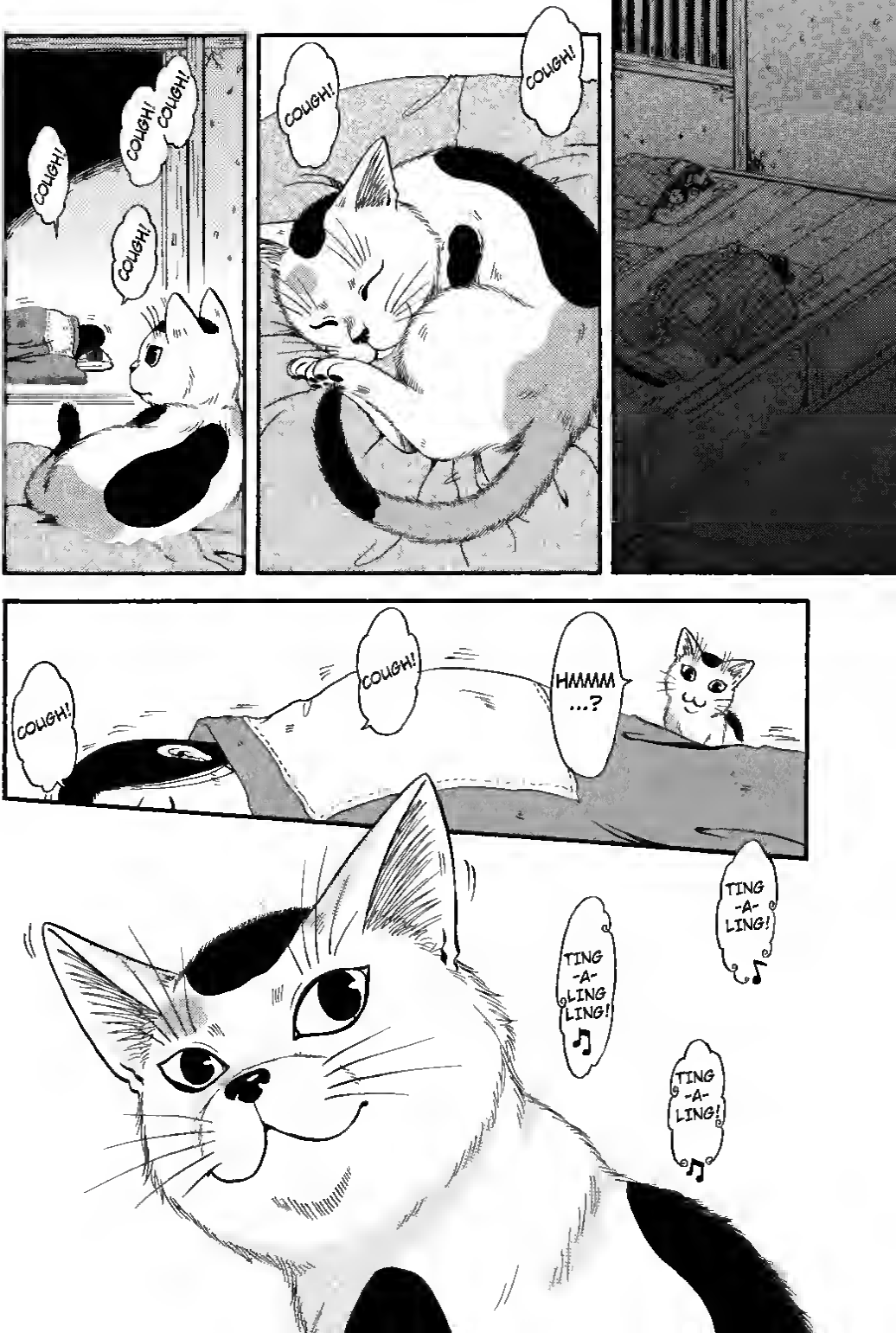

IN THE WASHTUB .....
THE STARS ARE ...

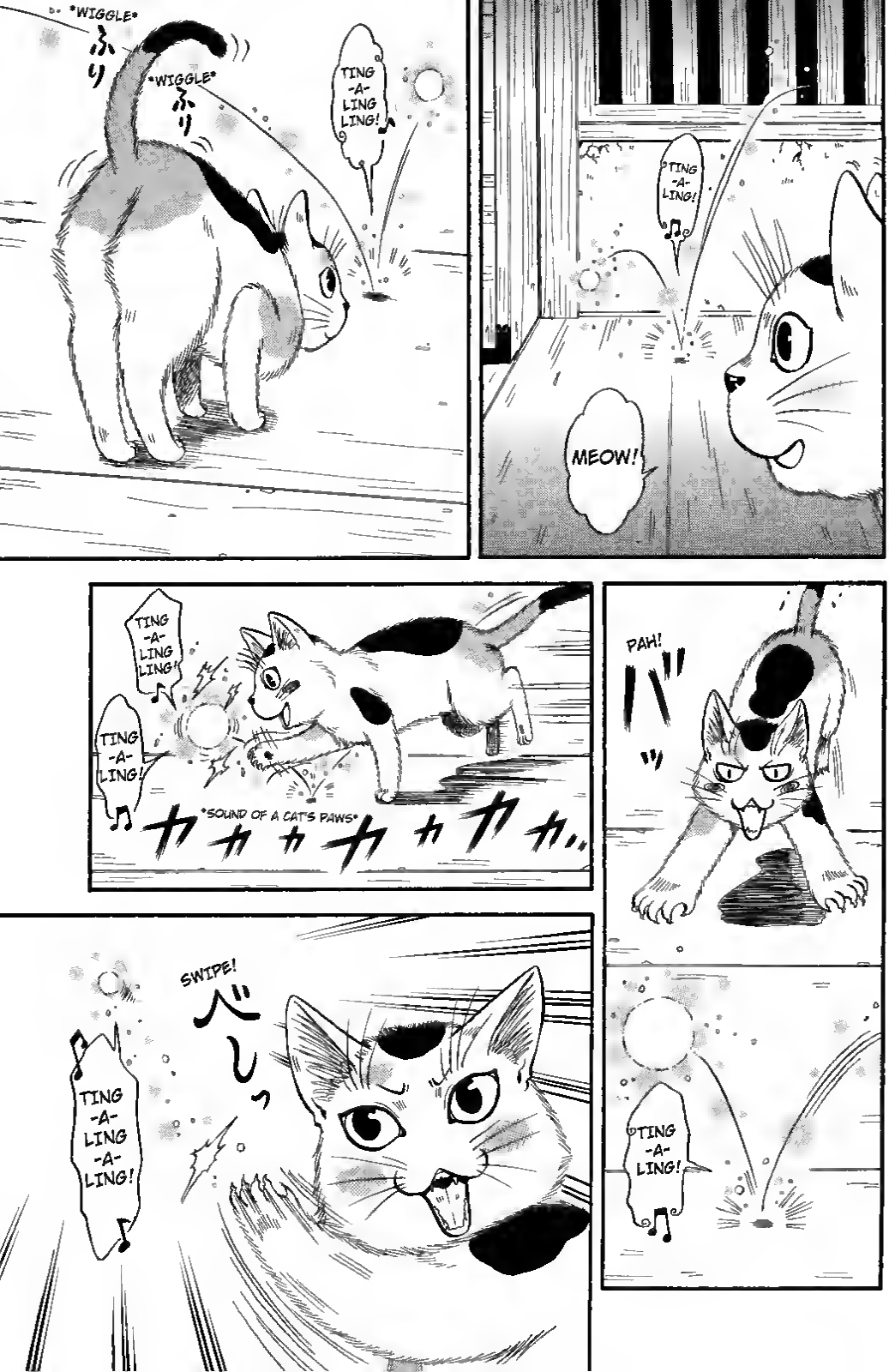


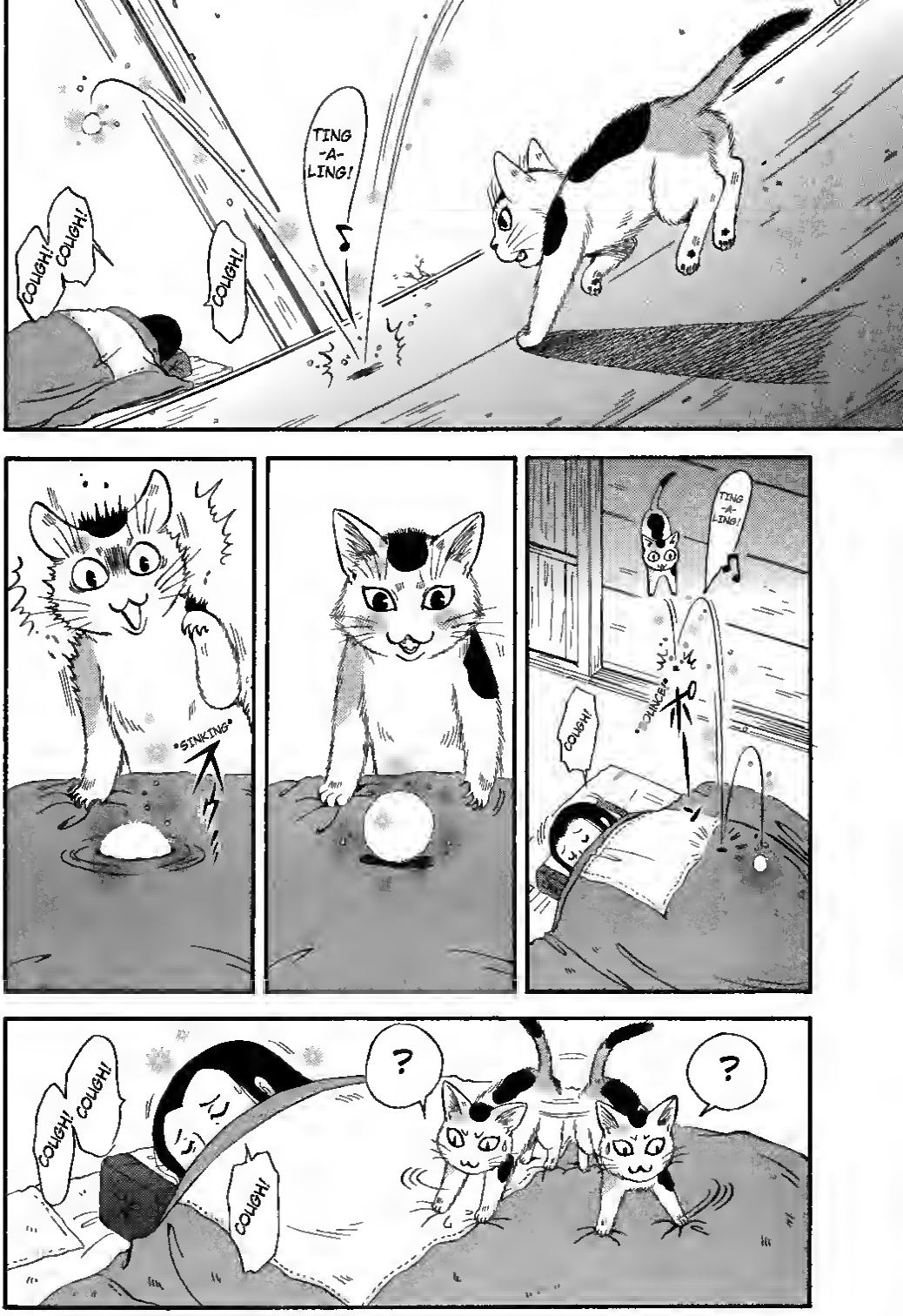




*MANJUU = FILLED YEAST BUNS

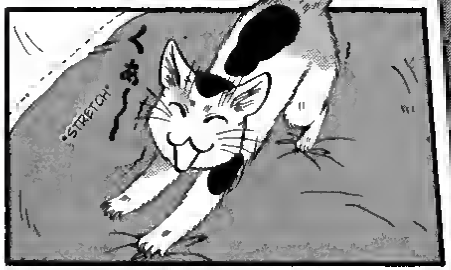

COUGH!
COUGH!
COUGH!
COUGH!
COUGH!
COUGH!
COUGH!
HMMMM ...?
TING -A- LING!
TING -A- LING LING!
TING -A- LING!


WIGGLE
ふり
WIGGLE
ふり
TING -A- LING LING!
TING -A- LING!
MEOW!
TING -A- LING LING!
TING -A- LING!
SOUND OF A CAT'S PAWS
PAH!
TING -A- LING!
SWIPE!
べしっ
TING -A- LING -A- LING!


COUGH! COUGH!
COUGH!
TING -A- LING!
"STINKING"
TING -A- LING!
"JUMP!"
COUGH!
COUGH! COUGH!
COUGH!
?
?

HMMM ....?
COUGH!
ZZZ...
ZZZ...

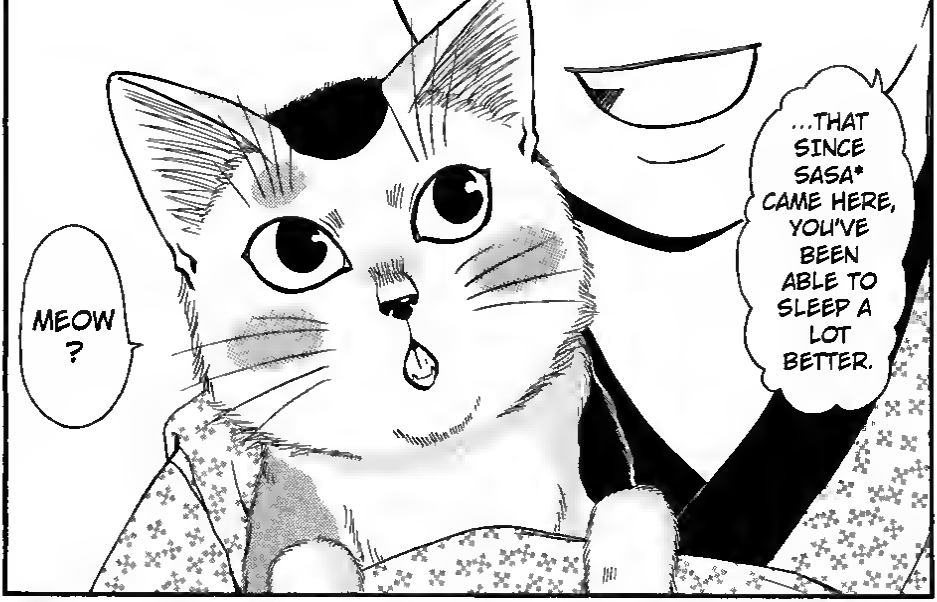
MEOW!


"STRETCH"
んぁ〜

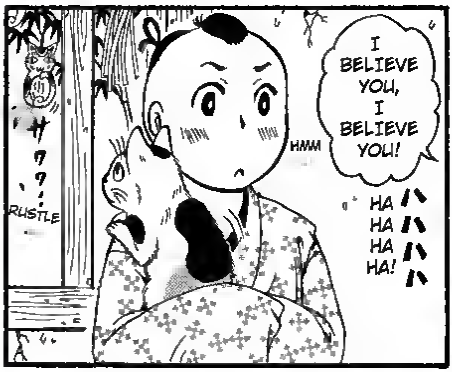
PURRRRR...

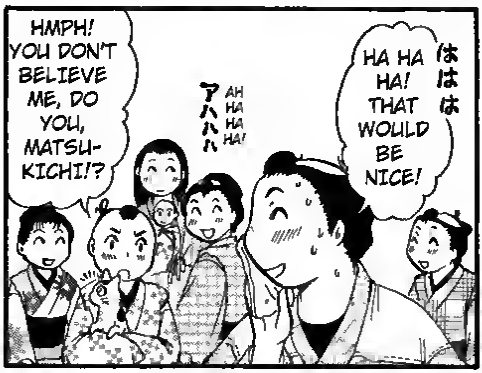
TING -A- LING
TING -A- LING
TING -A- LING!

THAT WAS SOME GREAT FOOD!
CLACK
COULD IT BE BECAUSE I SLEPT SO WELL LAST NIGHT?
I'M HOME!
AH! GOOD BOY!
OOH
AHH... I THINK ... I THINK ...
... IT MUST BE ...
WHEN I WOKE UP THIS MORNING, MY BODY FELT REFRESHED!
MOTHER, WHAT'S UP? YOU HAD TWO EXTRA SERVINGS TODAY!
COME ON OVER HERE!



*SASA = THE CAT'S NAME, MEANING "BAMBOO GRASS"





CARD: EVERYONE HEALTHY! -TOKUJI
CARD: I WISH FOR EVERYONE IN OUR FAMILY TO BE IN GOOD SPIRITS. -MATSUKICHI
ISN'T THAT RIGHT, SASA?
MEOW ...!
AH HA HA HA!

第十八話 完

END OF CHAPTER 18

TALES OF A CAT PAINTER

猫絵十兵衛

ねこえじゅうべえおときぞうし

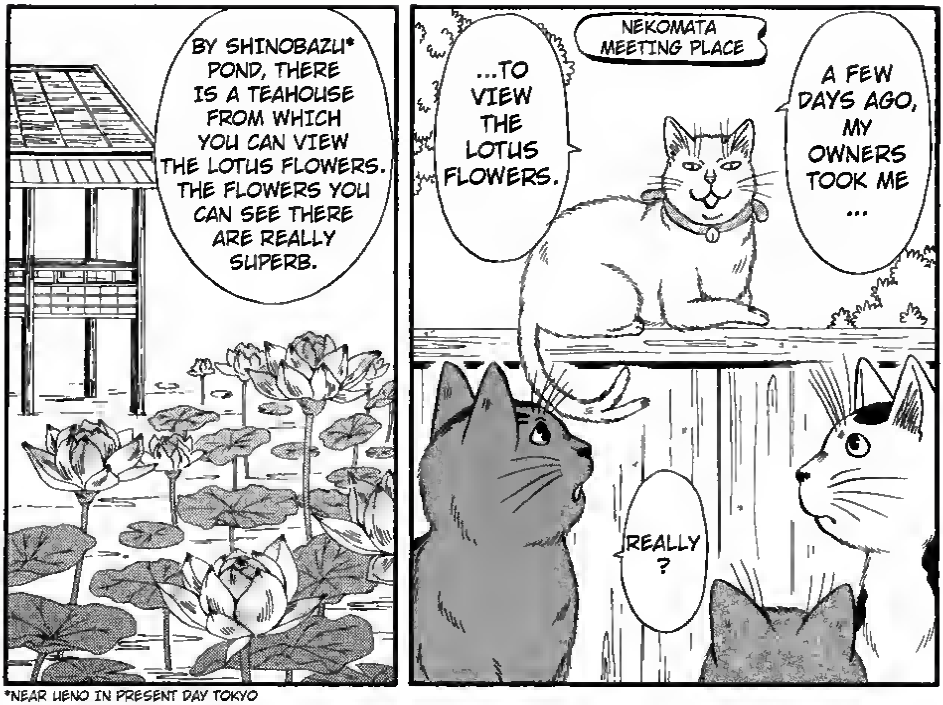
NEKOMATA'S LOTUS VIEWING

猫又衆の蓮見の巻

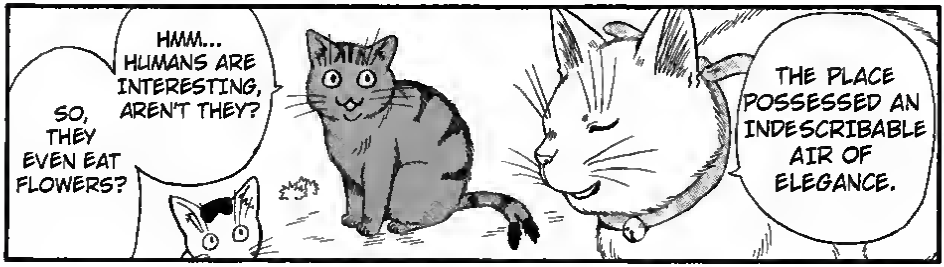
(ねこまたしゅう はすみ)

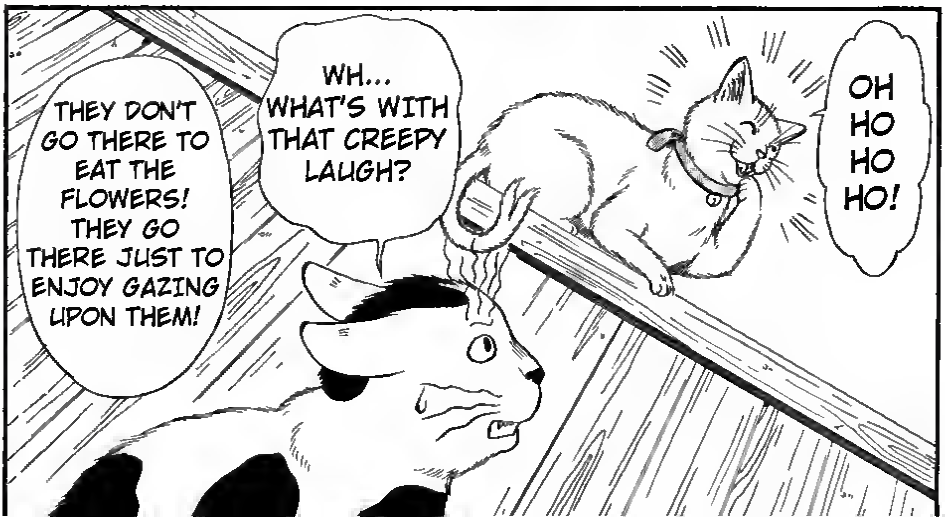
CICADA CRIES
じーわ
CICADA CRIES
じーわ
CICADA CRIES
じーわ
CICADA CRIES
じーわ
*COLD WATER!
COLD WATER!
CICADA CRIES
じーわ
CICADA CRIES
じーわ
MR. NITA, MR. NITA!
じーわ
CICADA CRIES

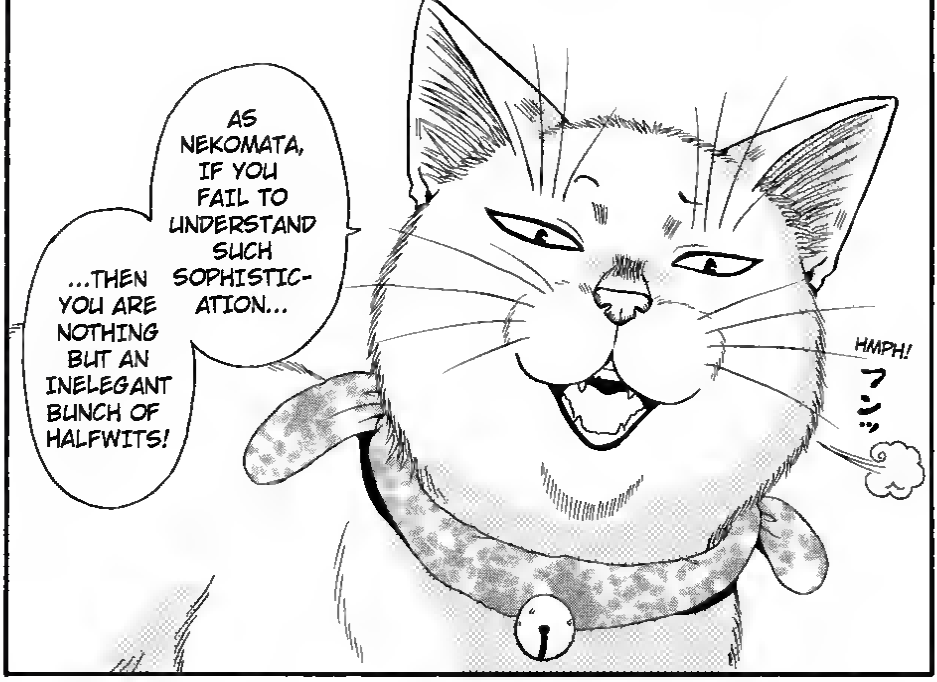
LET'S GO! LET'S GO!
WHY DON'T YOU COME TO VIEW THE LOTUS FLOWERS?
SINCE YOU'VE ASKED, LISTEN TO THIS ...
AND WHAT CIRCUMST-ANCES BROUGHT THIS ABOUT?
VIEWING THE LOTUS FLOWERS? THAT IS AN EXQUISITE IDEA!
*A "CHOU" IS AN OLD JAPANESE UNIT OF MEASURING DISTANCE. TWO CHOU = ABOUT 220 METERS.
THERE WAS A CAT LIKE THAT THERE ...
AHH ...
TWO CHOU* FROM HERE IS A CLOTHING STORE CALLED "ISEYA", WHERE THAT WHITE MALE CAT LIVES.
THAT CAT ...

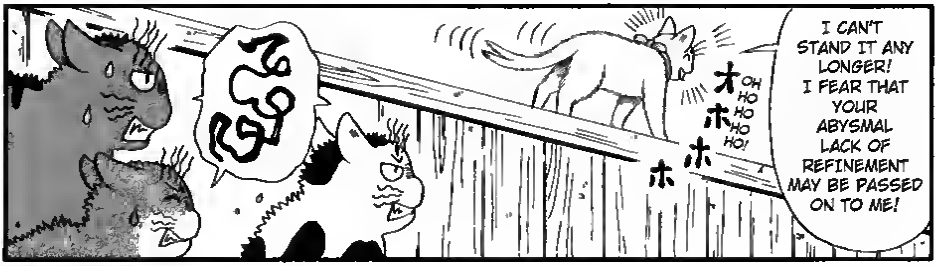

BY SHINOBAZU* POND, THERE IS A TEAHOUSE FROM WHICH YOU CAN VIEW THE LOTUS FLOWERS. THE FLOWERS YOU CAN SEE THERE ARE REALLY SUPERB.
NEKOMATA MEETING PLACE
A FEW DAYS AGO, MY OWNERS TOOK ME ...
...TO VIEW THE LOTUS FLOWERS.
REALLY ?

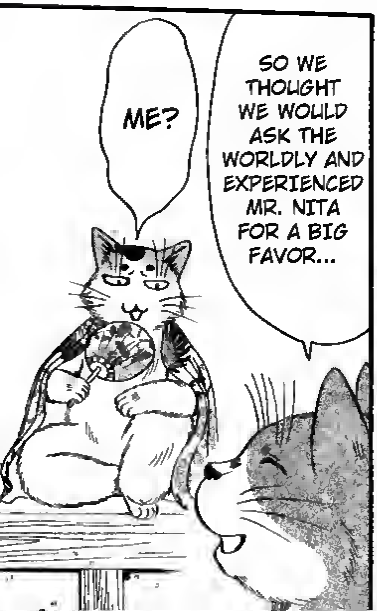
*NEAR UENO IN PRESENT DAY TOKYO

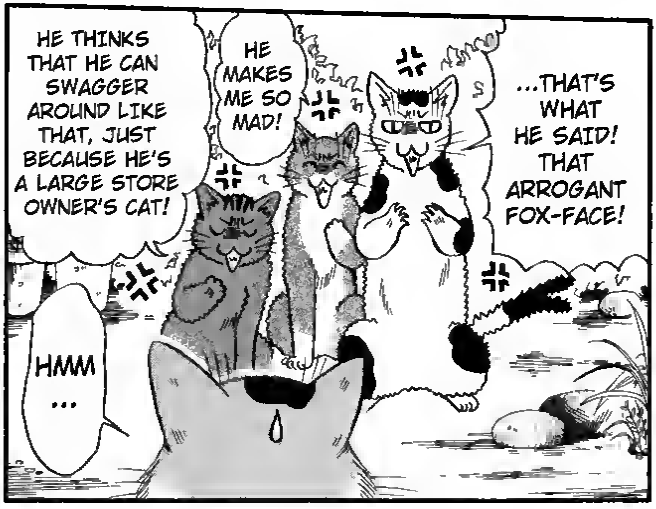


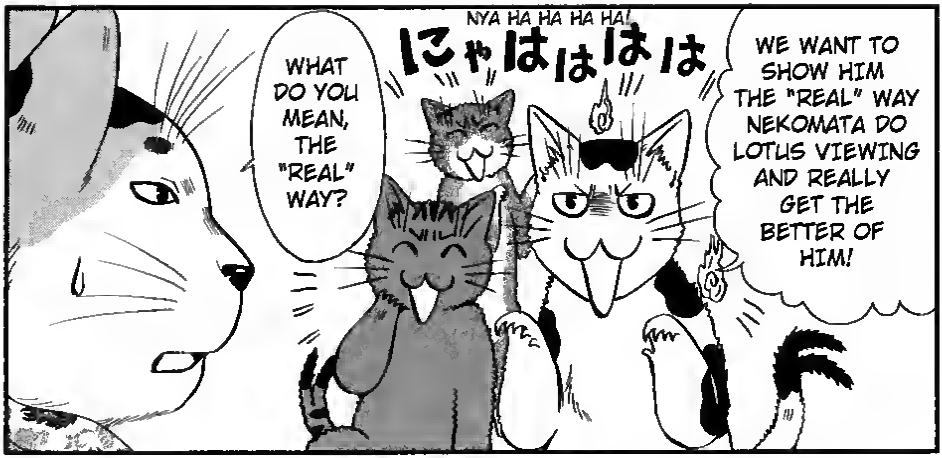

THEY DON'T GO THERE TO EAT THE FLOWERS! THEY GO THERE JUST TO ENJOY GAZING UPON THEM!
WH... WHAT'S WITH THAT CREEPY LAUGH?
OH HO HO HO!


AS NEKOMATA, IF YOU FAIL TO UNDERSTAND SUCH SOPHISTIC-ATION...
...THEN YOU ARE NOTHING BUT AN INELEGANT BUNCH OF HALFWITS!
HMPH!
フンッ

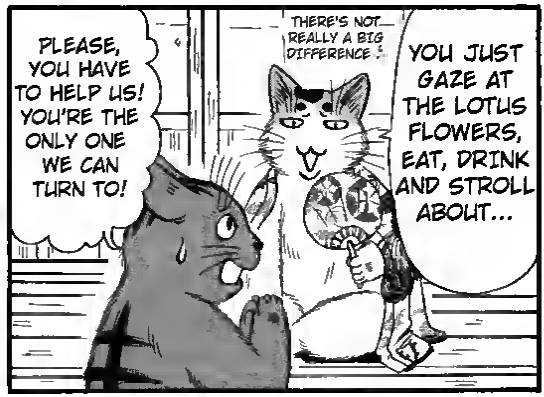

I CAN'T STAND IT ANY LONGER! I FEAR THAT YOUR ABYSMAL LACK OF REFINEMENT MAY BE PASSED ON TO ME!
オホホホホ!
ホ
ホ
ホ


ME?
SO WE THOUGHT WE WOULD ASK THE WORLDLY AND EXPERIENCED MR. NITA FOR A BIG FAVOR...


HE THINKS THAT HE CAN SWAGGER AROUND LIKE THAT, JUST BECAUSE HE'S A LARGE STORE OWNER'S CAT!
HE MAKES ME SO MAD!
...THAT'S WHAT HE SAID! THAT ARROGANT FOX-FACE!
HMM...


WHAT DO YOU MEAN, THE "REAL" WAY?
NYA HA HA HA HA!
にゃはははは
WE WANT TO SHOW HIM THE "REAL" WAY NEKOMATA DO LOTUS VIEWING AND REALLY GET THE BETTER OF HIM!

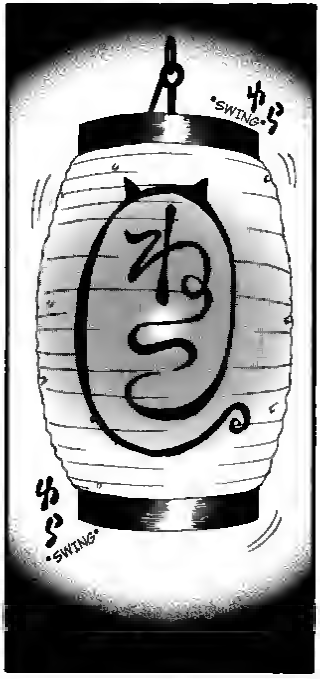
TIGER, YOU TOO?
MEW!


PLEASE, YOU HAVE TO HELP US! YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WE CAN TURN TO!
THERE'S NOT... REALLY A BIG DIFFERENCE!
YOU JUST GAZE AT THE LOTUS FLOWERS, EAT, DRINK AND STROLL ABOUT...

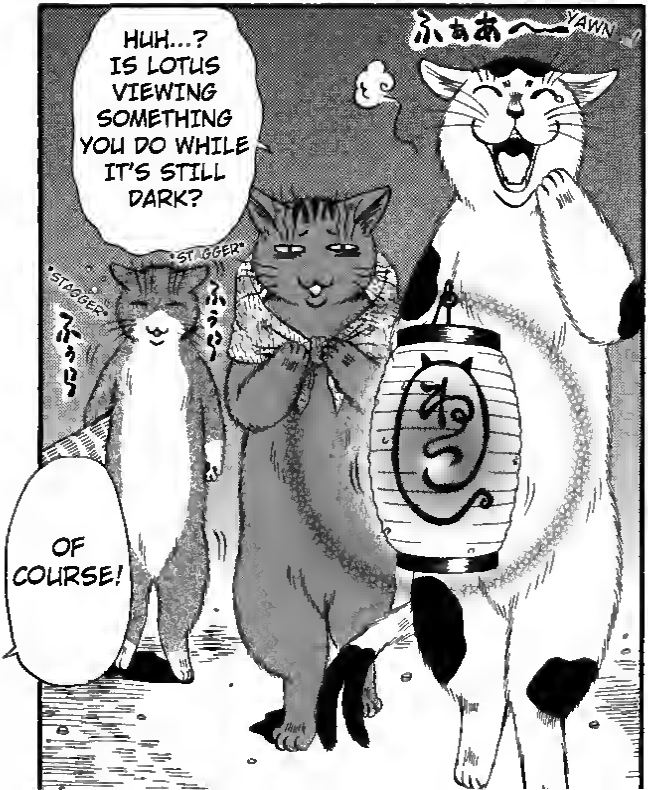
WELL THEN ...

LANTERN CAT

CICADA CRIES
じーわ
CICADA CRIES
じーわ
CICADA CRIES
じーわ
にょほほほ
LET'S GO AND DO LOTUS VIEWING THE "REAL" WAY... NYO HO HO HO!
ALRIGHT!
YEAH!
I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT!
MEW!

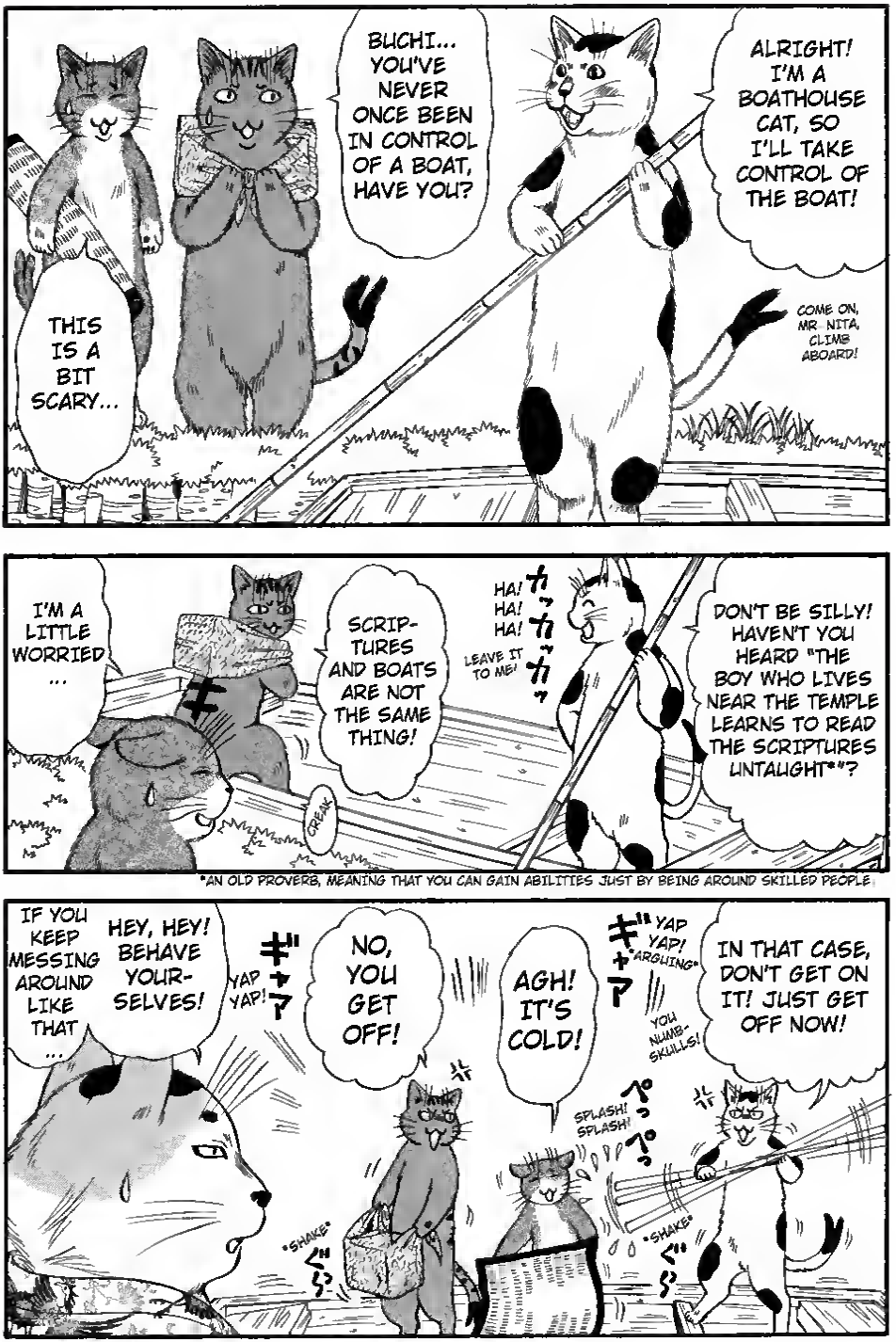

SWING
ゆら
ゆら
SWING

LANTERN. CAT


ふぁあ～ YAWN
HUH...? IS LOTUS VIEWING SOMETHING YOU DO WHILE IT'S STILL DARK?
STAGGER
ふらり
STAGGER
ふらり
OF COURSE!

YES...
STOP WHINING AND PICK THOSE FEET UP!
THE CORRECT TIME TO VIEW THEM IS AT THE BREAK OF DAWN.
MEW!
SAKE
YOU GUYS ARE SO NOISY!
YEAH, I'M SLEEPY ...
I'M SLEEPY AREN'T YOU?

RUSTLE
ガサッ
WHOOOSH!
A... BOAT?
YES.
IT'S A "LOTUS VIEWING BOAT" FOR GOING TO LOOK AT THE FLOWERS.
I GOT JUBEI TO DRAW IT FOR ME LAST NIGHT.

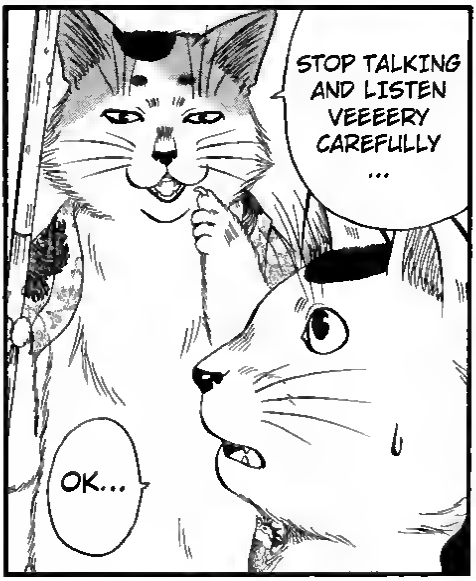

THIS IS A BIT SCARY...
BUCHI... YOU'VE NEVER ONCE BEEN IN CONTROL OF A BOAT, HAVE YOU?
ALRIGHT! I'M A BOATHOUSE CAT, SO I'LL TAKE CONTROL OF THE BOAT!
COME ON, MR. NITA, CLIMB ABOARD!
I'M A LITTLE WORRIED ...
SCRIP-TURES AND BOATS ARE NOT THE SAME THING!
CREAK
HA! HA! HA!
LEAVE IT TO ME!
DON'T BE SILLY! HAVEN'T YOU HEARD "THE BOY WHO LIVES NEAR THE TEMPLE LEARNS TO READ THE SCRIPTURES UNTAUGHT*"?
*AN OLD PROVERB, MEANING THAT YOU CAN GAIN ABILITIES JUST BY BEING AROUND SKILLED PEOPLE
IF YOU KEEP MESSING AROUND LIKE THAT ...
HEY, HEY! BEHAVE YOUR-SELVES!
YAP YAP!
NO, YOU GET OFF!
AGH! IT'S COLD!
YAP YAP! *ARGUING*
YOU NUMB-SKULLS!
IN THAT CASE, DON'T GET ON IT! JUST GET OFF NOW!
SPLASH! SPLASH!
SHAKE
SHAKE

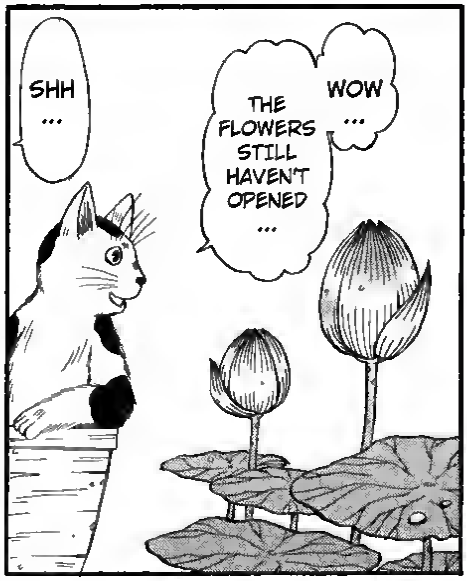
SPLASH!
SPLASH!
SPLASH!
THOSE GUYS ...
HELP ME!
"SPLUTTER SPLUTTER"
EEEK!
SPLASH!!
... YOU'LL FALL IN.
"ROLL"
AAAGH.... THE FEAST THAT I WENT TO GREAT LENGTHS TO PREPARE...
MEW
SQUELCH
SQUELCH
HLIFF
HLIFF
PLIFF

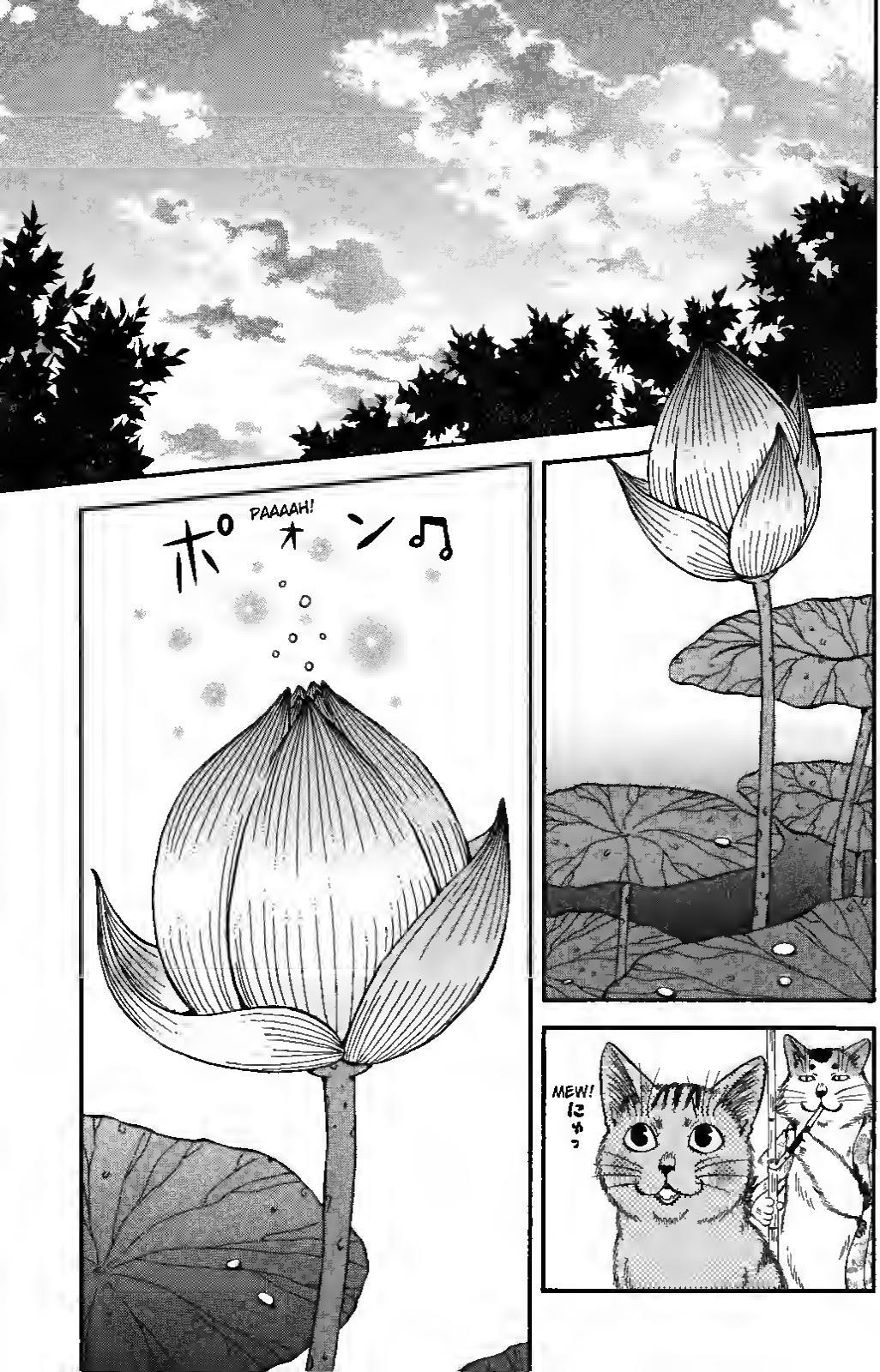
WHOOOSH!
WOAH!
MAW
MR. NITA, WE'RE SO SORRY...
HA HA! IT'S A GOOD THING THAT THE SAKE IS OK.
LINE UP THERE.
BOO HOO!
SHUUUU
HUH?
STOP
ぴた
TUMBLE ころっ
TUMBLE ころ
TUMBLE ころ
TUMBLE ころ
TUMBLE ころん
TUMBLE ころん

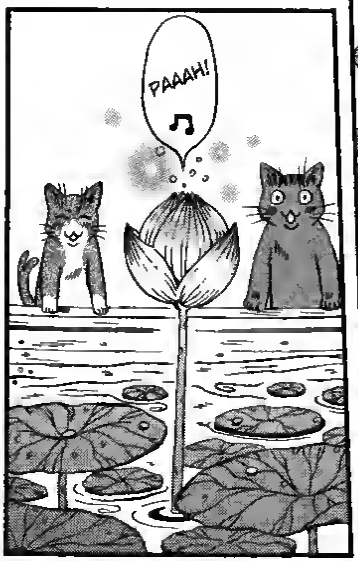
WOW
...
"FLUFF"
ふか
"FLUFF"
ふか
IT'S ALMOST DAWN.
COME ON, LET'S GO.
WET FUR FEELS HORRIBLE.
MEW!

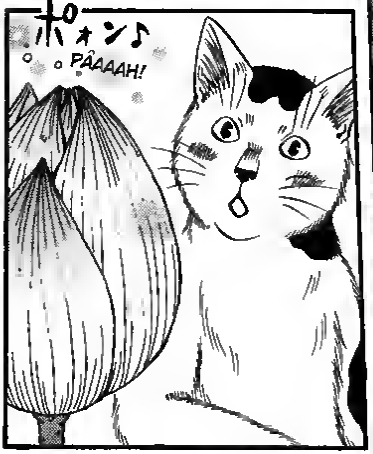
SWISH

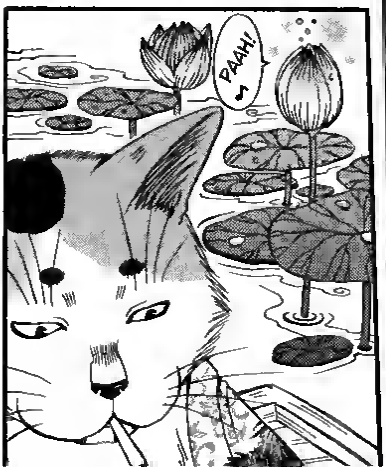

STOP TALKING AND LISTEN VEEEERY CAREFULLY ...
OK...


SHH ...
THE FLOWERS STILL HAVEN'T OPENED ...
WOW ...

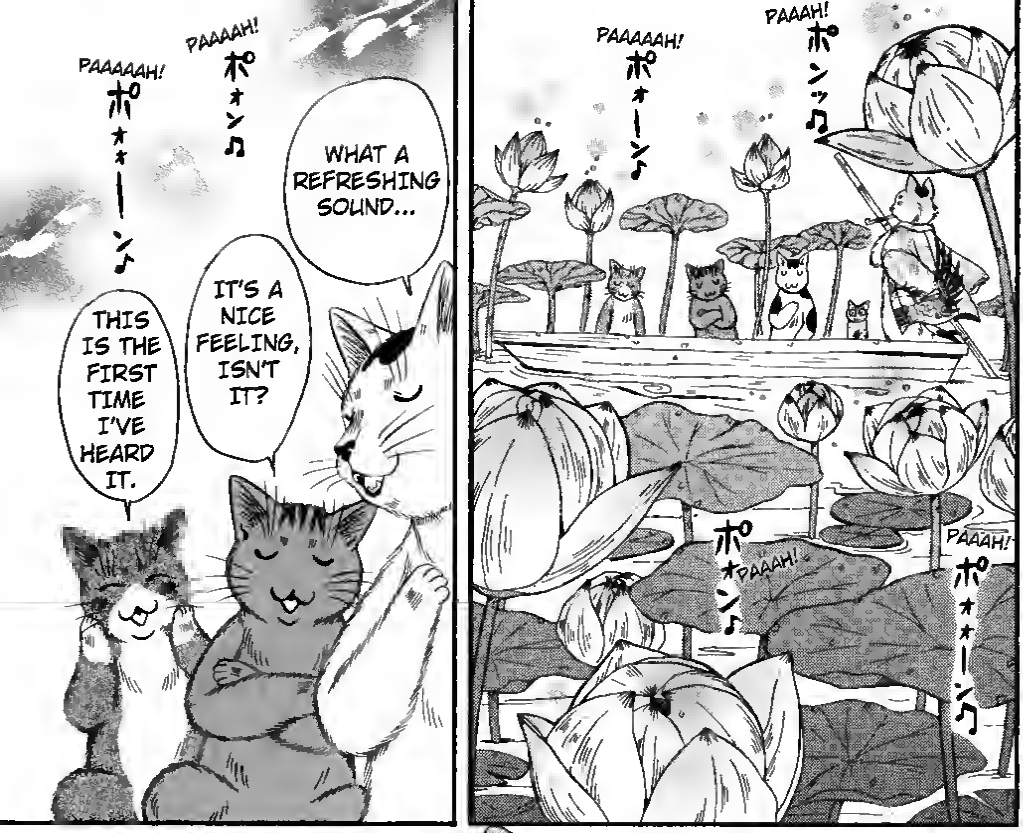

ポォォン♫
PAAAAH!
MEW!
にゃっ


PAAAH!

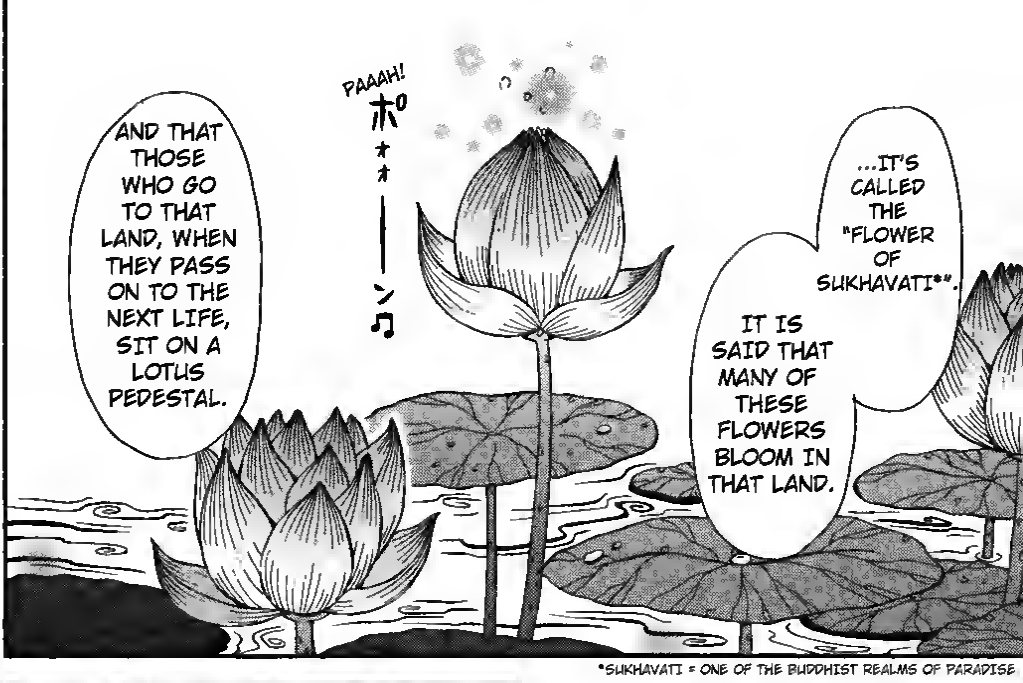

ポォン♪
PÂAAAH!


PAAH!

PAAAH!
PAAAH!
PAAAH!

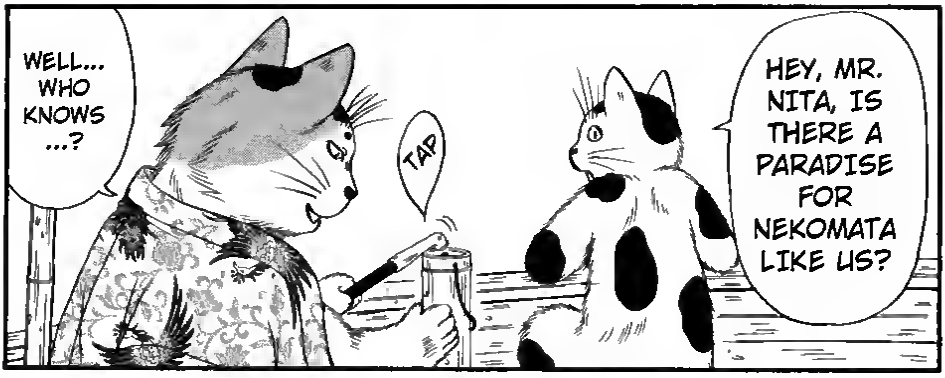

PAAAAH!
ポォン♫
PAAAAAH!
ポォォーン♪
WHAT A REFRESHING SOUND...
IT'S A NICE FEELING, ISN'T IT?
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE HEARD IT.
PAAAAH!
ポォン♫
PAAAAAH!
ポォーン♪
PAAAH!
ポンッ♫
ポォン♪
PAAAH!
PAAAH!
ポォォーン♫

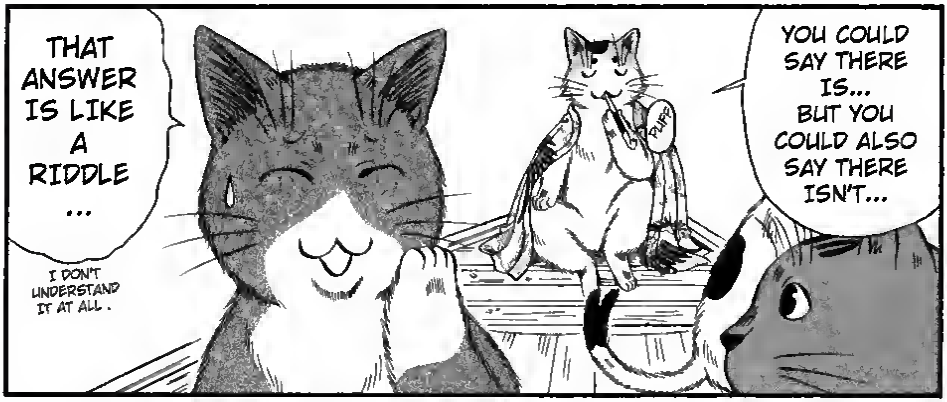
THE LOTUS ...
WHILE IT GROWS IN THE MUD...
... PURE AND BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS BLOOM FROM IT.
MAYBE THAT'S WHY...

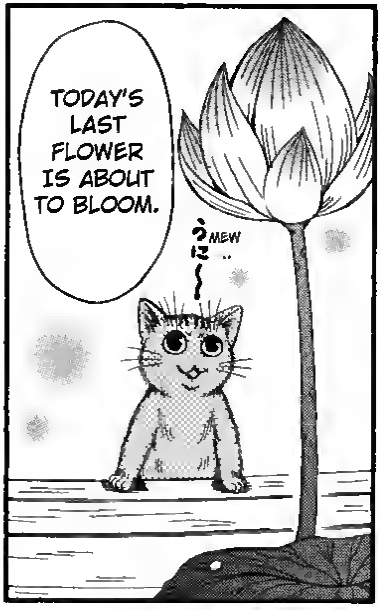

...IT'S CALLED THE "FLOWER OF SUKHAVATI*".
IT IS SAID THAT MANY OF THESE FLOWERS BLOOM IN THAT LAND.
PAAAH! ポォォォーーーン♫
AND THAT THOSE WHO GO TO THAT LAND, WHEN THEY PASS ON TO THE NEXT LIFE, SIT ON A LOTUS PEDESTAL.

*SUKHAVATI = ONE OF THE BUDDHIST REALMS OF PARADISE

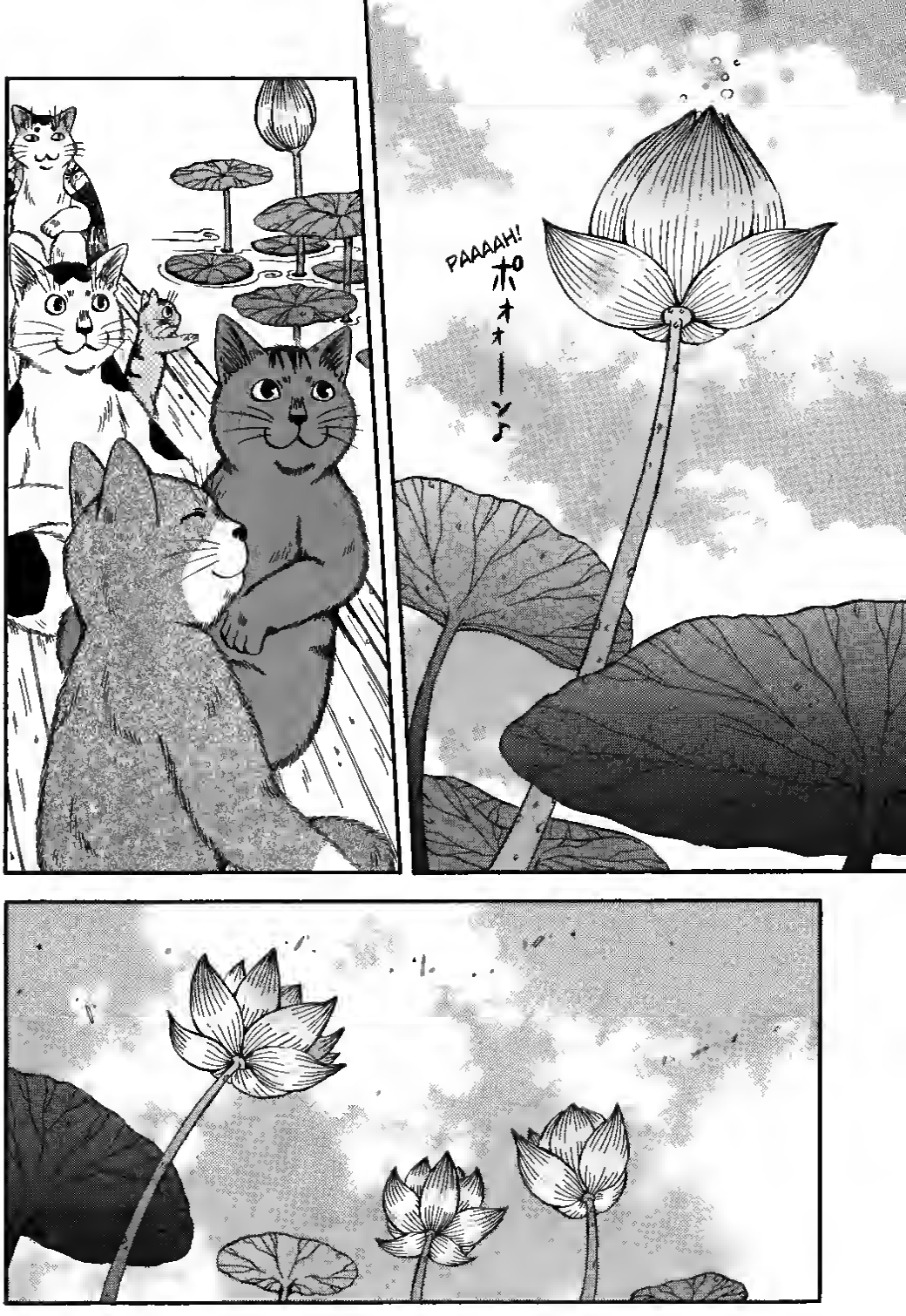
THAT'S AN AMAZING FLOWER, ISN'T IT?
にょほほほっ NYO HO HO!
WELL, I'M A CAT, I'VE NEVER BEEN TO PARADISE!
IF YOU LISTEN TO THE MYSTERIOUS SOUNDS THAT HUMANS CANNOT HEAR ...
PAAAH! ポォォン...♫
ポ
PAAAH! ン♫
IT CANNOT NECESSARILY BE SAID THAT IS MISTAKEN.

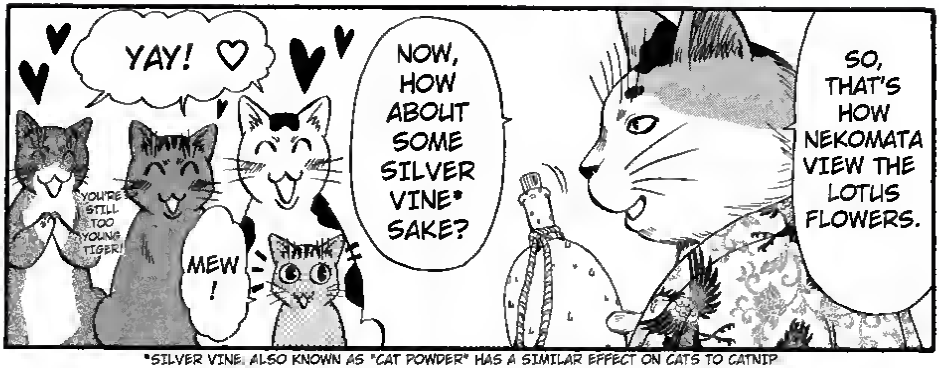

WELL... WHO KNOWS ...?
TAP
HEY, MR. NITA, IS THERE A PARADISE FOR NEKOMATA LIKE US?


THAT ANSWER IS LIKE A RIDDLE ...
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT AT ALL.
PUFF
YOU COULD SAY THERE IS... BUT YOU COULD ALSO SAY THERE ISN'T...

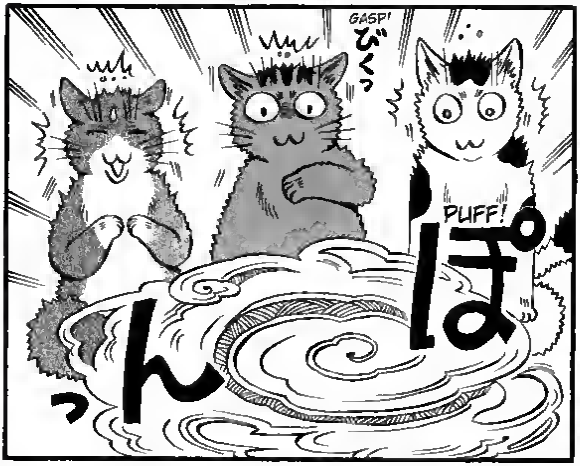

TODAY'S LAST FLOWER IS ABOUT TO BLOOM.
うMEW
にぃ..

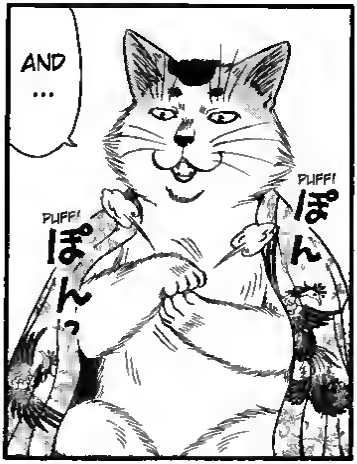
HEY... LISTEN CLOSELY ...
HA HA!
SHUP

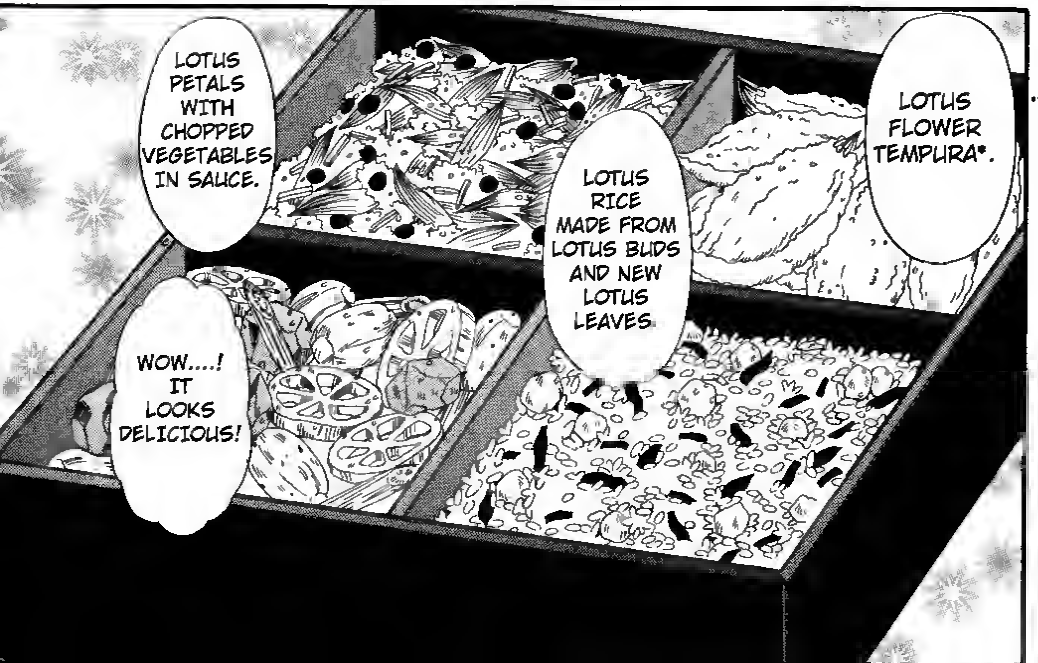

PAAAAH!
ポオオーーン♪



*SILVER VINE, ALSO KNOWN AS "CAT POWDER" HAS A SIMILAR EFFECT ON CATS TO CATNIP






LOTUS PETALS WITH CHOPPED VEGETABLES IN SAUCE.
LOTUS RICE MADE FROM LOTUS BUDS AND NEW LOTUS LEAVES.
LOTUS FLOWER TEMPURA*.
WOW....! IT LOOKS DELICIOUS!

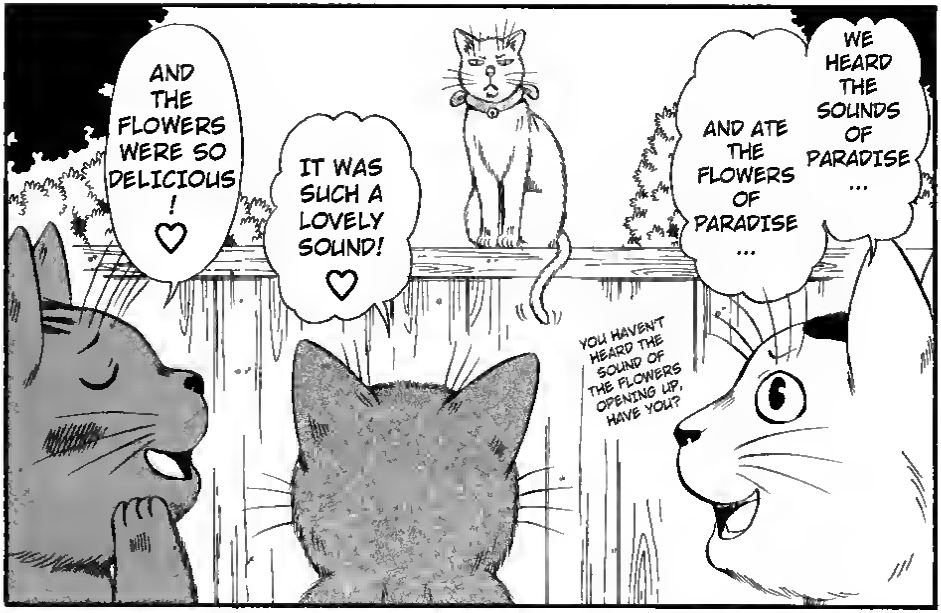
*TEMPURA = DEEP FRIED IN BATTER

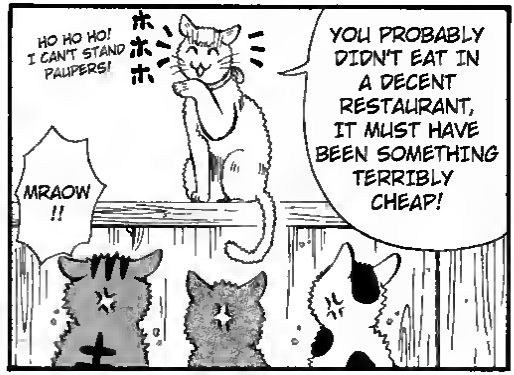
YEAH... SURE.
TIGER, HERE'S A RICE DISH MADE FOR CATS.
MEW!
MR. NITA, YOUR MAGIC IS AMAZING!
IT'S LIGHT AND TASTY!
IT'S LIGHT PINK
THIS TEMPURA HAS SUCH A WONDERFUL COLOR!

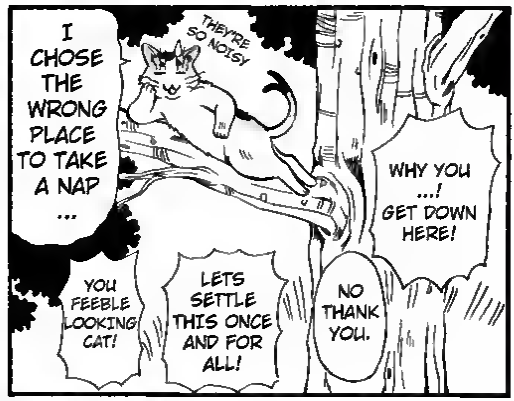
**YUKATA = A CASUAL KIMONO

*GETA = WOODEN SANDALS. THIS SONG IS A STORY ABOUT A CHEATING WIFE WHO TRIES TO HIDE HER LOVER WHEN HER HUSBAND COMES HOME AND BLAMES THE SOUND OF HIS FOOTSTEPS ON A CAT.

IT'S SO HOT
I THINK I DRANK A BIT TOO MUCH ...
AHHH ...
じーわ
CICADA CRIES
じーわ
CICADA CRIES
TING A LING
WELL, WELL, WELL... IF IT ISN'T YOU THREE?
にゃっ
NEOW!
YOU LOOK SO HOT AND BOTHERED FOR THIS TIME OF DAY.
TING A LING
IT'S YOU! FROM ISEYA!
オホホホ
OH HO HO HO!
YOU SAID BEFORE THAT YOU WERE GOING TO DO "REAL" LOTUS VIEWING, DIDN'T YOU?
HUH!
OF COURSE WE DID!


AND THE FLOWERS WERE SO DELICIOUS ! ♡
IT WAS SUCH A LOVELY SOUND! ♡
AND ATE THE FLOWERS OF PARADISE ...
WE HEARD THE SOUNDS OF PARADISE ...
YOU HAVEN'T HEARD THE SOUND OF THE FLOWERS OPENING UP, HAVE YOU?


HO HO HO! I CAN'T STAND PAUPERS!
ホホホ
MRAOW !!
YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T EAT IN A DECENT RESTAURANT, IT MUST HAVE BEEN SOMETHING TERRIBLY CHEAP!


I CHOSE THE WRONG PLACE TO TAKE A NAP ...
THEY'RE SO NOISY
WHY YOU ...! GET DOWN HERE!
YOU FEEBLE LOOKING CAT!
LETS SETTLE THIS ONCE AND FOR ALL!
NO THANK YOU.

第十九話 完

END OF CHAPTER 19

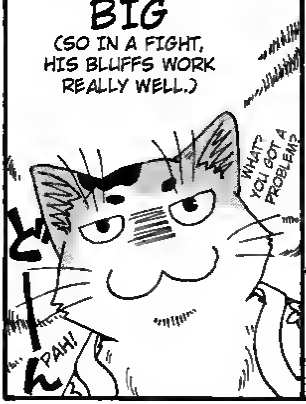
初出 FIRST PUBLISHED

TALES OF A CAT PAINTER
猫絵十兵衛 御伽草紙

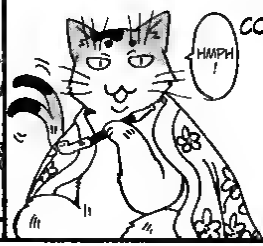
『ねこぱんち』'08.⑰～'08.㉓
"NEKO PUNCH" 2008 (17) - 2008 (23)

OTHER あとの はなし。 STORIES

AND ALSO, HIS **FACE IS BIG** (SO IN A FIGHT, HIS BLUFFS WORK REALLY WELL.)



FIRST, HE HAS A BIG BODY (WHICH IS AN ADVANTAGE IN FIGHTS). HIS TAIL IS LONG (IN A FIGHT, THIS MAKES HIM LOOK BIGGER).

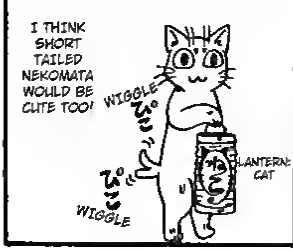


HMM... DESPITE HIS APPEARANCE (LAUGHS), IN THE WORLD OF CATS, NITA IS CONSIDERED TO BE QUITE MANLY.

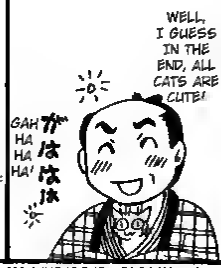
HOORAY, HOORAY FOR THE THIRD VOLUME!

THANK YOU EVERYBODY, MEW!

THERE ARE MANY THEORIES AS TO WHY SHORT-TAILED CATS WERE POPULAR BUT THE MOST COMMONLY ACCEPTED IS THAT LONG TAILS WOULD SPLIT INTO TWO AND THE CAT WOULD BECOME A NEKOMATA, SO THEY WERE THOUGHT TO BE A LITTLE CREEPY.

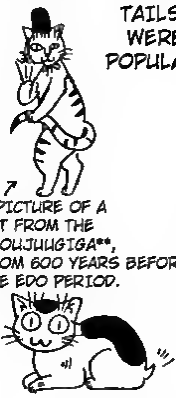


KUNIYOSHI UTAGAWA***, UPON WHOM THE CHARACTER JUUGEN IS BASED, ALSO PREFERRED SHORT-TAILED CATS AND DREW THEM MUCH MORE OFTEN THAN LONG-TAILED CATS.



ORIGINALLY, JAPANESE CATS HAD ROUND FACES AND LONG TAILS.

IN THE EDO PERIOD, CATS WITH SHORT TAILS WERE POPULAR.



A PICTURE OF A CAT FROM THE CHOUJUUGIGA**, FROM 600 YEARS BEFORE THE EDO PERIOD.

CATS DIFFER FROM HUMANS IN THAT THE WEAK-LOOKING MALES ARE NOT POPULAR WITH THE LADIES.

OF COURSE, CATS WANT TO REPRODUCE WITH THOSE THAT HAVE STRONG GENES.

***KUNIYOSHI UTAGAWA = A FAMOUS EDO PERIOD WOOD BLOCK PRINT (UKIYOE) ARTIST

**CHOUJUUGIGA = BELIEVED TO BE THE OLDEST COMIC BOOK IN JAPAN, DEPICTING ANIMALS BEHAVING LIKE HUMANS.

IN THE EDO PERIOD, IT SEEMS THAT IT WHEN IT CAME TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING MARRIAGE, THOSE IN THE SAMURAI CLASS OR STORE OWNER CLASS WERE NOT PERMITTED TO CHOOSE THEIR PARTNER FREELY IF THEY WANTED TO MAINTAIN THEIR STATUS.

I MADE UP THE FOX-CANDY MERCHANT'S SONG MYSELF!

NOW, TO TALK ABOUT HOW I GATHERED MATERIAL FOR THE STORIES.

BARK!

EVEN THOUGH I CHECKED, I COULDN'T FIND IT! BOO HOO HOO!

IT APPEARS THAT THIS CUSTOM CONTINUED UNTIL THE EARLY SHOWA** PERIOD.

EVEN NOW DOGS OFTEN HAVE THEIR TAILS OR EARS CUT FOR THE SAKE OF APPEARANCE.

THAT'S TERRIBLE!

MEOW!

IT SEEMS THAT THE ENGLISHMAN, BASIL HALL CHAMBERLAIN, WHO VISITED JAPAN IN THE EARLY MEIJI* PERIOD, FOUND THIS TO BE QUITE SHOCKING!

NO!

THERE WAS A TERRIBLE CUSTOM WHEREBY CATS BORN WITH LONG TAILS WOULD HAVE THEM CUT SHORT.

**SHOWA PERIOD = 1926 - 1989

*MEIJI PERIOD = 1868 - 1912

MEOW!

THE MOUNTAIN CAT WEASEL- IN UKIYOE PICTURES, YOU CAN SEE THE FACES OF BLACK-SPOTTED CATS SUDDENLY APPEARING FROM BOXES. HOWEVER, IN MODERN-DAY FESTIVALS, A CREATURE LIKE A WEASEL (OR STOAT) APPEARS BUT IT DOESN'T REALLY LOOK LIKE A CAT.

YONOGI IS A MIX BETWEEN A STOAT AND A CAT!

THE CAT OF TORTOISE MATSUMOTO***, (WHOSE MUSIC I OFTEN LISTEN TO WHILE WORKING), PRODUCED MILK WHEN ANOTHER CAT'S KITTENS WERE BROUGHT TO THE HOUSE MOTHERHOOD IS AN AMAZING THING...

THERE REALLY HAVE BEEN STORIES OF CATS AND DOGS PRODUCING MILK WHEN FOSTERING THE YOUNG OF ANOTHER ANIMAL.

RUFF RUFF!

ALREADY BIGGER THAN MIMI-MARU

***TORTOISE MATSUMOTO - LEAD SINGER OF THE BAND "ULFULS"

MEW! SEE YOU NEXT TIME!

THAT'S IT! THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR READING!

Thanks,

TO ALL THE EDITORS, THE READERS, MADOKA, MIMOZO, GON-CHAN, MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY, THANK YOU ALWAYS!

MOST OF THE PLACES FAMOUS IN THE EDO PERIOD FOR VIEWING LOTUS FLOWERS HAVE DISAPPEARED BUT THE LOTUS FLOWERS IN UENO ARE STILL AMAZING TO THIS VERY DAY.

LOTUS FLOWERS ARE NICE BUT WATER LILIES ARE GOOD TOO!

IN THE EDO PERIOD, SOME OF THE MOST COMMON WISHES IN THE TANABATA FESTIVAL WERE TO BECOME BETTER AT WRITING OR SEWING.

CARD? OF COURSE, GOOD HEALTH IS NUMBER ONE!

健康第一

おしまい
THE END